

R I D I N G :

• ON THE FLAT AND ACROSS COUNTRY.

RIDING:

THE FLAT AND ACROSS COUNTRY.

A GUIDE TO PRACTICAL HORSEMANSHIP.

BY

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(Late Captain "The Buffs"),

OR OF "VETERINARY NOTES FOR HORSE-OWNERS;" "ILLUSTRATED HORSE-BREAKING;"
TRAINING AND HORSE MANAGEMENT IN INDIA;" "SOUNDNESS AND AGE OF HORSES," ETC.

• *THIRD EDITION.*

REVISED, WITH EIGHTY ILLUSTRATIONS

BY

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PREFACE TO THE THIRD EDITION.

THE object of this book is to teach the way to ride in a "workmanlike" manner, whether on the road, field, polo ground, Row, steeplechase course, or race track. While closely adhering to the best English and Irish traditions on Riding, I have ventured to make some remarks on the use of the hands and legs, as "aids;" for I know from experience how helpful it is to the saddle-horse, whatever may be the work to which he is put. Beyond this, I have not encroached on the province of the "High School," many of the conditions of which are entirely different from those of our English style. Although I had, when I was an officer in the Royal Artillery, the advantage of learning military equitation, as taught in England, I must freely acknowledge my indebtedness, with respect to any knowledge I may possess of the modern and greatly improved system of school riding, to M. Fillis's *Principes de Dressage et d'Équitation*, and M. Barroil's *L'Art Équestre*, in both of which the various *airs de manège* are admirably expounded.

As my wife and I are bringing out a book on side-saddle riding (to be called *The Horsewoman*), I have omitted the chapter on "Ladies' Riding" that was in the previous edition. I have added sufficient fresh pages to make up for this omission, and thirty-five new illustrations, namely Figs. 5, 6, 9, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 39, 40, 41, 45, 52, 55, 56, 57, 59, 60, 61, 64, 65, 66, 68, 69, 70 and 71, which have been drawn from photographs by Mr. J. H. Oswald Brown. A few others have been re-drawn.

The chief new matter is that contained in Chapter III., about the seat, and the "indications" of the hands and legs (also in Chapter IV.) ; the remarks about teaching to ride without reins (in Chapter IV.), and to pick up things from horseback off the ground ; and instructions (in Chapter V.) for riding vicious horses, especially buck-jumpers. Chapters XII. (on military riding) and XIII. (on the "making" of polo ponies) are entirely new. An index has also been added.

M. H. HAYES.

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21st August, 1891.

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RIDING.

CHAPTER I.

HOW TO HOLD THE REINS.

Holding Single Reins in one Hand—Shortening the Reins when held in one Hand—Holding Single Reins in Both Hands—Shortening the Reins when held in both Hands—Holding Double Reins in one Hand—Holding Double Reins in both Hands—Changing Reins from two Hands into one Hand—Military Method of Holding the Reins—Tying up one Rein.

Holding single reins in one hand.—When the left hand, for instance, is used, the near rein should be drawn

Fig. 1.

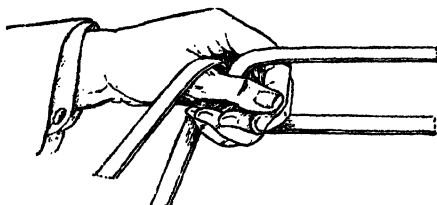


between the third and little fingers and brought out between the first finger and thumb ; while the off rein should

be placed over the palm of the hand, so that both reins may cross on it (see Fig. 1).

The knuckles should now be turned up, and the hand held as in Fig. 2. The knuckles should be at about an angle of 45° to the ground, and not horizontal; for keeping them in that position would cause the elbow to be turned out and the arm, consequently, to work at a mechanical disadvantage. If the knuckles be kept in a vertical position, as in military riding, see Fig. 10, the "play" of the

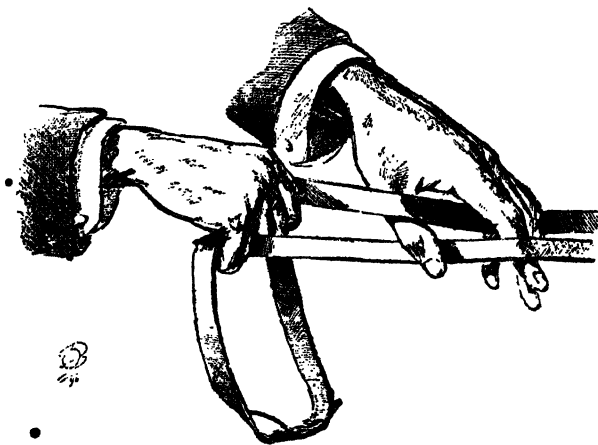
Fig. 2.



wrist will be from side to side, and not forward and backward as it ought to be. Shifting the bit about in the mouth, by any lateral action of the rider's hand, will tend to prevent the animal from "going up to his bridle." The hand should be allowed to drop easily from the wrist, while the elbow works in a line with the side. The hand will then be in the most comfortable position; and the arm will be able to exert its strength to the best advantage, and can freely "give and take" to the movements of the horse's head.

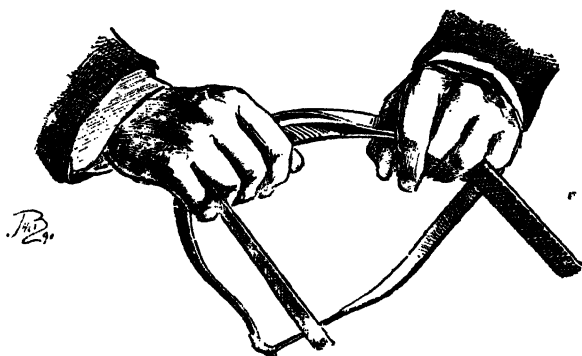
Shortening the reins when held in one hand.—If held in the left hand, for instance, take the reins in the right hand, slip the left hand forward, as shown in Fig. 3, and, having got the required length, close the fingers of the left hand on the reins and let go the right. Or, take the slack of the reins in the right hand, and draw them through the left, until they become short enough.

Fig. 3.



Holding single reins in both hands.—The off rein is taken up between the third and little fingers of the right hand, and the "slack" of the near rein passes between its first finger and thumb. Both hands will now have exactly the same hold on the reins (see Fig. 4).

Fig. 4.



Shortening the reins when they are held in both hands.—When the horse is not pulling hard, the hands may be simply drawn apart, while the hold of the first, second, and third fingers of the hands on their respective reins is loosened, and that of the little fingers is tightened on the free part of the reins, which action will naturally cause the hands to slide forward. When the proper length is obtained, the first, second and third fingers of each hand should close on their respective reins. The hands should then be brought together in their original position, the slack of the near rein being allowed to slip through the right hand, and the slack of the off through the left. This method is specially applicable to our purpose when we are obliged to shorten the reins, and desire at the same time to interfere as little as possible with the horse's mouth.

The readier and more effective way, however, is, for instance, to let go the slack of the off rein with the left hand, which should be slipped forward on the near rein, and, having got the proper length, the off rein should be taken between the first finger and thumb of the left hand, so that the reins may "cross" as in Fig. 3. The right hand now quits its hold, and takes up the off rein as before (see Fig. 4). The left hand is carried forward with a somewhat circular movement, so that an "even feeling" with both reins may be maintained, the whole time, on the horse's mouth.

Fig. 5.



Holding double reins in one hand.—The forefinger of, say, the left hand separates the two off reins, while the third finger divides the two near ones (see Fig. 5). The

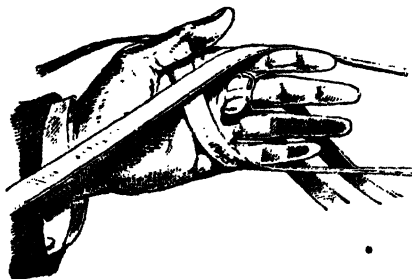
reins are crossed, as with the single rein. It is convenient to have the reins on which we want to have the stronger pull, on the outside, while the other reins—the curb ones, for instance—are kept apart by the second finger (see Fig. 5).

Fig. 6.



The rider, if he chooses, may have the outside near rein

Fig. 7.

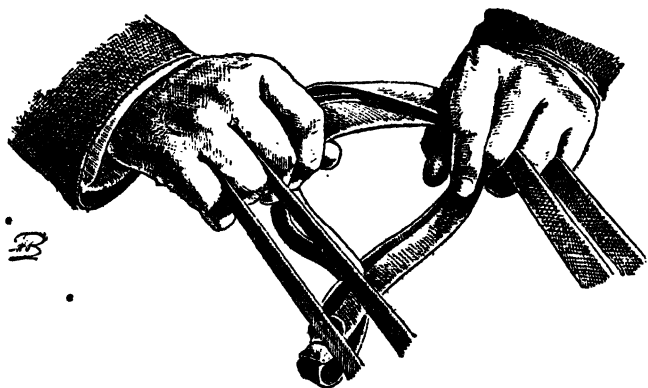


(when only one hand is used) pass outside of the little finger

(see Fig. 6), instead of between it and the third finger. If he wishes to ride on one rein only, he may hold it crossed in his hand, and may hook up the other on the middle finger, and may let it loose (see Fig. 7), or draw it up a little.

Holding double reins in both hands.—This may be

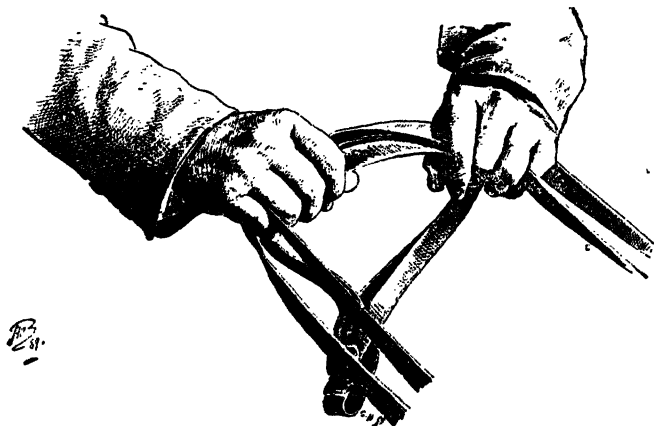
Fig. 8.



done in the manner shown in Fig. 8 ; or, both reins may be used as one. Or the outside reins may pass over the little fingers of each respective hand (see Fig. 9), instead of between them and the third fingers. The reason why the latter plan is the one generally adopted by jockeys, is because it leaves the little finger free to keep a hold on the whip or cane. The former, however, gives the stronger "hold."

When the reins of a *double bridle* are held in both hands, and the horse is not "pulling," we may have the snaffle reins on the outside, and the curb reins, lengthened out an inch or two, on the inside. But with an animal that may require a touch of the curb, we might have the curb reins on the outside, over the little fingers, so that we may be able to feel them at any moment.

Fig. 9.



Changing reins from two hands into one hand.—To bring them into the left hand, for instance, the rider may let go the slack of the off rein with his left hand, and may pass the off rein into it, by sliding his right hand back along this rein, and carrying it behind the left hand before quitting

it. Or, the reins may be taken up with one hand, in the manner shown by Fig. 3. The first method is applicable for cross-country and ordinary riding; the second, for "finishing," when the reins have to be shortened, at the same time as they are taken up by one hand.

Double reins may be shifted into one hand in the same manner.

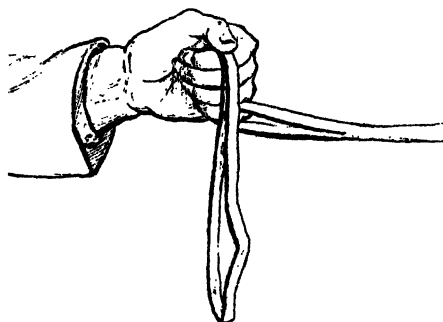
By adopting the system I have described, the rider will be enabled to obtain the firmest possible hold on the reins; and he can, with precision and rapidity, effect every necessary change of grip, without disturbing, in the slightest, the "even feeling" on the animal's mouth, which is essential to all fine horsemanship.

As a rule, a man should ride with both hands on the reins.

Military method of holding the reins.—The cavalry man maintains his hold on the reins by the lateral pressure of his fingers, and by the downward pressure of the thumb on them. The reins are divided by the little finger, and are brought up through the hand between the forefinger and thumb (see Fig. 10). It goes without saying that this method, or any modification of it, is far more tiring to the hand; affords a much less firm grip on the reins; and gives a far less direct indication to the horse when turning him,

than our cross-country and flat-race style. It is fairly well adapted for its special purpose, namely, that of enabling the trooper to shorten the reins at will, with the forefinger and thumb of the right hand, the other fingers of which are supposed to be occupied with the sabre or lance. It is, however, wholly inapplicable to two-handed riding; for, if

Fig. 10.

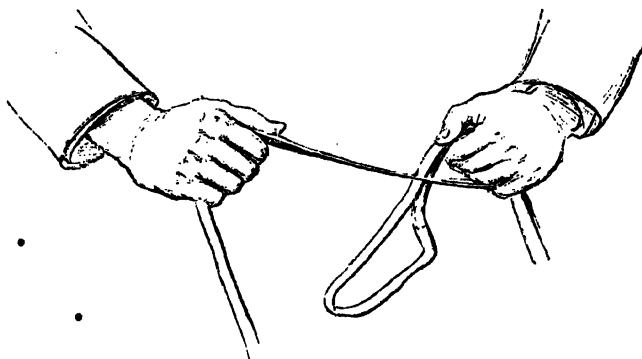


the horseman wishes to use both hands, he is obliged to lengthen out the off rein, in order to get an "even feeling" on both reins, as in Fig. 11.

If the rider has, now, to quit the reins with the right hand, as, for instance, when he is about to use the whip, he cannot take up the reins in the left hand in the same prompt and secure manner as he can by the "crossed" method. I need hardly point out that any "fumbling" with the reins, when they are being changed from one hand

to another, would be quite sufficient for a jockey to lose a race, or for a hunting man to fail to prevent a refusal at a fence. It frequently happens, in the hurry of the moment, that the rider who adopts the "school" system neglects to shorten the off rein at all, and, consequently, pulls his

Fig. 11.



horse round to the left, by reason of the near rein being shorter than the off. Another objection is that one hand has got quite a different hold on the reins to that which the other has. When the reins are "crossed," both hands have identically the same hold, and the off rein can be passed into the left hand in an instant.

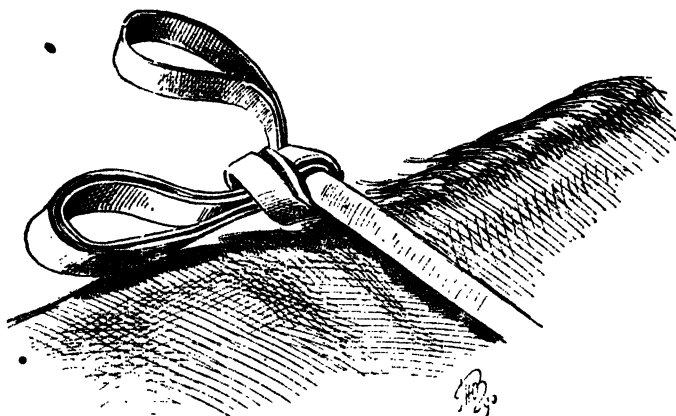
On this subject, Colonel Greenwood, in his excellent work, *Hints on Horsemanship*, pertinently remarks that

“Even our finest two-handed English riders (who, in my opinion, are the finest riders in the world), when they use the right hand on the right rein, continue to hold both reins with the left hand, and then slip the right rein a little through the left hand in order to place both hands even. This is a most vicious habit. When they quit the right rein to use the whip, or to throw the arm back at a fence (another most vicious habit), by their system of holding and handling the reins they have not the power to place the *lengthened* right rein *short* in the left hand. Alas, poor horse! he is then pulled to the left by the left rein, driven to the left by the whip on the right, and then abused for answering the *natural* indication which he has been trained *habitually* to obey.”

Tying up one rein.—With double reins, if the rider wishes to use only one, he may put a *slipknot* (Fig. 12) on the other, at the desired length, so that he may have it ready to take up at any moment. It should be put well forward on the neck, so that the horse, in extending his head, may not be liable to bear suddenly on the bit to which the reins with the slipknot are attached. “The reins should never be tied in hunting, or in swimming a horse, since, by catching across the neck, they act like a bearing rein, and oblige the horse to carry his head up and his nose

in. In hunting this would bring his hind legs on his fences, and oblige him to leap from the top of his banks and to land all fours, instead of extending himself and letting himself

Fig. 12.



down gently. In swimming, it obliges him to keep his whole head and neck out of water. I very nearly drowned a horse in this way in the Serpentine."—(*Colonel Greenwood*).

CHAPTER II.

MOUNTING AND DISMOUNTING.

Mounting with Stirrups—Mounting without Stirrups—Mounting with Stirrups in Military Style—Getting a Leg Up—Mounting During Movement—Dismounting—Dismounting with Stirrups in Military Style—Dismounting During Movement.

Mounting with stirrups.—(1.) As a rule, if the man and horse be of proportionate height, it is best for the former to stand a little to the left front of the near shoulder of the latter, take up the reins with the left hand, and lay hold of the mane with it, about half way up the neck. He should take the stirrup in the right hand, at the part where the leather goes through the eye of the iron. The left foot is placed in the stirrup, the right hand well over on the off side of the cantle, so that he may not disarrange the position of the saddle when mounting (see Fig. 13). The reason for standing at the left front of the shoulder is to be out of the way of danger, in case the animal hits out with his near fore, or cow-kicks with his near hind. By placing the left hand well up on the crest, the rider ensures for

It looks very slovenly for the rider, when throwing his right leg over, to do so with a bent knee. All appearance of "climbing" into the saddle, in a laboured manner, should be avoided. Care should be taken not to touch the horse with the point of the left toe when mounting, nor with the right foot when taking up the stirrup. One should never make a practice of putting the left foot in the stirrup, before getting on, without first steadying the iron with the right hand ; for, if this be done, the horse, if at all fidgety, will be rendered unsteady by the toe being poked at him in this way.

If the animal be difficult to mount, the rider, when he takes up the reins and places his left hand on the mane, may have to shorten the near rein, so as to prevent the horse from getting away (see Fig. 14). The horse will then be forced, unless he be very headstrong, to go round and round the rider, instead of moving forward. If, on the contrary, the off rein be shortened, the rider will lose command over the animal if it begins to revolve ; for he will be on the outside, instead of the inside, of the circumference of the circle described by the horse. When the rider has his left foot in the stirrup, his left hand on the mane, and his right on the cantle, he should, if at all active, be able to get into the saddle, or rest himself, foot

in stirrup, even if the horse moves forward, or begins to "dance about."

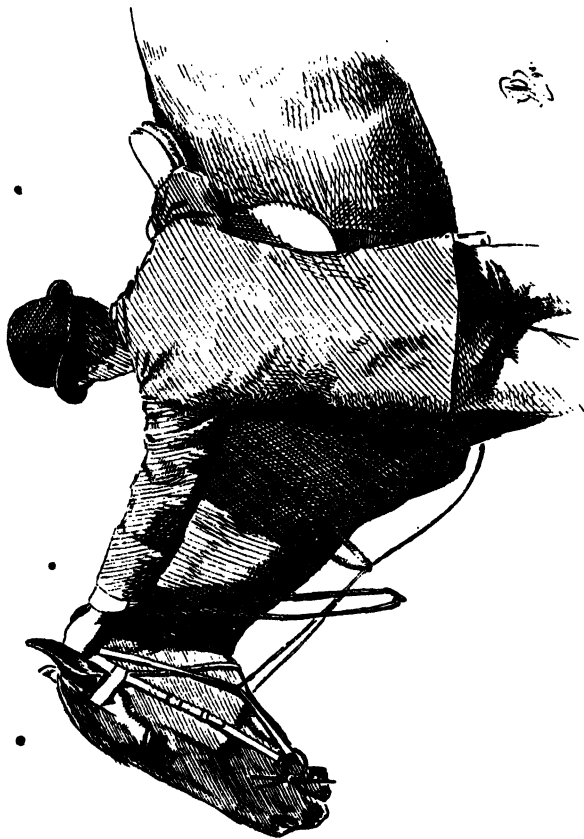
(2.) Australian rough-riders, who are unsurpassed in ability to mount "difficult" horses, as a rule, bring the animal's head round by taking a short grip of the near rein, which they hold in the left hand, along with a handful of the mane. They then put the left foot in the near stirrup with the aid of the right hand, taking care not to touch the animal's side with the foot ; and place the right hand on the pommel (see Fig. 14), and after, maybe, a tentative effort or two, they glide into the saddle almost before the horse is aware of the intention. Placing the right hand on the pommel, when mounting, is less liable to disarrange the position of the saddle, and, consequently, to make the animal fidgety (which is a great point to be avoided when trying to mount an unbroken animal), than putting it on the cantle, as is usually done. It has, however, the disadvantage of rendering the mounting more difficult to a man who is not very active, than by the method of placing the hand on the cantle. These rough-riders, as a rule, always place the right hand on the pommel. They frequently cover the horse's near eye with a soft hat, cap, or other object before mounting, and remove it as soon as they are in the saddle. They, also, sometimes

use a surcingle placed over the pommel, in order to prevent the saddle moving forward, in the event of the animal bucking. I do not know which to admire most, the cleverness with which these men mount the most fractious brutes, or the skill with which they "remain."

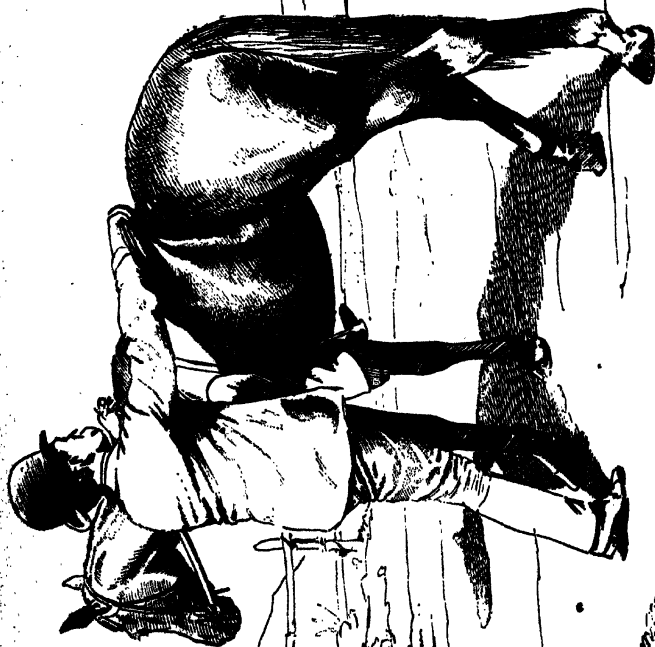
When attempting to mount fidgety horses or ponies which have hogged manes, one may, in the first instance, catch the animal by the left ear or by the crown piece of the bridle with the left hand, and then shorten the reins (see Fig. 15).

Mounting without stirrups.—This may be done by taking the reins and mane, about half way up, in the left hand, placing the right hand on the pommel, and then vaulting lightly into the saddle. Mounting by placing the left hand on the pommel, and the right on the cantle, and then supporting the weight of one's body on both hands, before throwing one's right leg over, may do well enough with a steady school horse, but it is a dangerous and unworkmanlike proceeding with any animal which is not a mere machine; for if the horse moves after the would-be rider has made his spring up, and before he is safely in the saddle, he will run the risk of getting a fall, or of having to let go his horse. But, with the left hand on the mane, and the right hand on the pommel, even if

FIG. 15.



To face page 18.



he fails to mount, the horse cannot very well break away.

Mounting with stirrups in military style.—In military school riding, the action of mounting is divided into “preparing to mount,” and “mounting.” The motions may be briefly described as follows :—

Preparing to mount.—(1.) Stand facing the horse with the right foot opposite the stirrup, and the heels about six inches apart. Place the left hand on the crest of the horse, about twelve inches from the pommel. (2.) With the right hand draw the reins through the left hand, so as to obtain a light and equal feeling of both reins on the horse's mouth. (3.) With the right hand throw the slack of the reins to the off side ; twist a lock of the mane round the left thumb ; and take hold of the left stirrup. (4.) Place the left foot in the stirrup ; the left knee against the flap of the saddle ; and the right hand on the cantle. Draw the left heel back, so as to avoid touching the horse's side with the toe (see Fig. 16).

• *Mounting.*—(1.) By a spring of the right foot, raise the body erect in the stirrup. Bring both heels together and draw them back a little. Keep the knees firm against the saddle, and the body partially supported by the right hand. (2.) Swing the right leg over the cantle, which the

right hand quits, just in time to get out of the way of the right leg, and goes to the pommel, so as to support the body, which falls gently into the saddle. (4.) The left hand quits the mane; and the right, the pommel. The reins are taken up at a proper length, and the right foot is placed in the off-stirrup.

“Getting a leg up.”—A man should always get a leg up, especially if he be at all heavy, with a light saddle, say, one not over four pounds weight; as mounting in the ordinary manner would be very apt to damage it. With a racing saddle, the jockey should take the reins in his left hand, and place it on the mane if he can reach it. If tall enough, he should place the flat of his right hand on the centre of the saddle, and not on the cantle, lest by bearing his weight on it he might hurt the tree. He should then bend his left knee and raise his foot, while the man who is going to give him a leg up, should take hold of his raised leg, just above the foot, with his right hand, or, if the rider be comparatively heavy, he may place his fore arm underneath the jockey's left leg, close to the foot, steadying himself the while with his left hand on the horse's mane and should raise him up without giving any jerk, which might cause him to come heavily down on the saddle, or might cant him over to the other side. The jockey, being

raised to the proper height, brings his right leg over the saddle while steadying himself with his left hand on the mane, and the flat of his right hand on the centre of the saddle. He then sinks carefully down into the seat and takes his stirrups. If the saddle be a very light one, the jockey, when getting into it, should bear the weight of his body on his thighs, and should not plump suddenly down in the saddle lest he might injure the tree. The same method of mounting may be adopted with any other kind of saddle, though the precautions I have described against breaking it need not be strictly observed.

Mounting during movement.—The rider should, as directed by Colonel Greenwood, hold the mane and reins in his left hand and the pommel with his right, and then spring into the saddle, after taking a few steps along with the horse. This is much easier to do than when standing still, and is a most useful feat to learn. Being able to mount in this manner may, after a fall, save one from being “thrown out” during a “run,” or from losing a steeplechase.

Dismounting.—(1). The readiest way is to take the reins in the left hand, draw them through it, and grasp the mane about half way up the neck ; catch the pommel with the right hand ; take the feet out of the stirrups ; and spring lightly down, landing about on a line with the point of the

horse's shoulder. If the active horseman wishes to remount while the animal is moving on, he has only to take two or three steps forward without shifting the position of his hands, to enable him to spring back into the saddle.

The second method is, however, the usual way. It is the best for men who are not quick on their legs, and is somewhat similar to the one laid down for the cavalry soldier.

(2). Place the left hand with the reins on the mane about half way up the neck, and the right hand on the front of the right flap of the saddle (see Fig. 17). Take the right foot out of the stirrup; swing the leg with the knee straight, over the cantle; place the right hand on the pommel, or on the off side of the cantle, whichever comes the easier; alight on the ground, with the right foot to the left front of the animal's near shoulder (see Fig. 18); and remove the left foot from the stirrup. The right hand is placed on the front of the off flap, in preference to placing it on the pommel, both for safety sake, in the event of the horse making any violent or unexpected movement, and to avoid the risk of causing the saddle to shift its position. I have taken for granted that the rider is of average height. It looks very awkward for a man, when dismounting, to bring his right leg, with a bent knee, over the saddle, and to get off "all



FIG. 16.

of a heap." When dismounting, as well as when mounting, the body should be kept erect, and the different movements should be performed with smartness and precision, although without any appearance of stiffness or exaggerated gesture. I may remark that every motion of the horseman ought to be characterised by grace.

An inexperienced rider, especially if his horse be fractious, will be much assisted in dismounting, by the groom standing in front of the animal and holding its head by the snaffle reins, one in each hand, and three or four inches from the rings on either side. The horse's mouth should be held somewhat higher than its withers. If there be no snaffle, the groom should hold the cheek-pieces of the headstall of the bit ; but should not touch the curb reins.

Dismounting with stirrups in military style.—Here the action of dismounting is divided into "preparing to dismount" and "dismounting."

"Preparing to dismount."—(1.) The right hand takes hold of the reins behind the left, and the right foot quits the stirrup. (2.) The left hand is made to slide forward on the reins, until it is about twelve inches in front of the pommel. (3.) The right hand throws the slack of the reins to the off-side, takes a lock of the mane, brings it through the left, and twists it round the left thumb ; the fingers of

the left hand closing on it. The right hand is then placed on the pommel or off-holster, the body being kept erect.

Dismounting.—(1.) Supporting the body with the right hand and left foot, the right leg is brought gently (without touching the horse's hind quarters, or the saddle) to the near side, heels together. (2.) The body is gently lowered until the right toe touches the ground. (3.) The left foot quits the stirrup and is placed in a line with the horse's fore feet; the position of the hands remaining unaltered. (4.) Both hands quit their hold; the man turns to the left on the left heel, and brings the body square to the front. During the turn, the right hand lays hold of the rein near the ring of the bit, and raises the horse's head as high as the man's shoulder.

Dismounting during movement.—Dismount by the first method, see page 21, taking care, if the horse is going fast, to support one's weight for a moment on one's hands and to throw the feet forward. This can be done at any pace.

CHAPTER III.

THE SEAT, HANDS, AND LEGS.

The Seat—The Military Seat—Length of the Stirrups—Position of the Hands—Conforming to the Motion of the Horse—Good Hands—Hands and Legs as “Aids”—Riding with a Slack Rein.

The seat.—There are two objects for which a man, as a rule, assumes a seat on a horse. The one is to “stick on ;” the other, to ride so that the horse will carry the weight to the best possible advantage. Experience, as well as theory, tells us that these two styles are not altogether compatible one with the other ; although they may be combined to a certain extent.

The art of “remaining” consists in keeping the centre of gravity of the body behind the points of support—the knees for instance—and between them, as regards side movement. Hence, the Australian rough rider, whom we may regard as the *beau idéal* “sticker on,” rides with comparatively short stirrups, so as to keep himself from

going forward ; sits well back ; keeps his thighs more horizontal than vertical ; and gets his grip with his knees and thighs against the large rolls of his Colonial saddle, and with his calves on the flaps. He keeps a light hold on the reins, so as to avoid getting the upper part of his body pulled forward. He also watches the animal's ears, so as to be ready to turn, in the event of its making any sudden twist to one side or the other.

As the grip of the knees will, in all ordinary cases, be applied above the "swell" of the horse's barrel, it will act at a mechanical disadvantage. Hence, it will be found that security of seat will be greatly enhanced by also obtaining a certain amount of grip from the calves of the legs, which, as a rule, can be applied below the swell of the barrel. We may observe that, with ordinary shaped legs, the more the rider turns his toes in, the greater will be the preponderance of the pressure from the knees, over that from the calves, and *vice versa*. Bad riders who affect plain flap saddles, often afford good illustrations of this fact ; for, failing to get sufficient knee-hold on the slippery flaps, they instinctively turn out their toes to get what grip they can with the calves of their legs, and, presumedly, having short stirrups, so as to obtain all possible purchase on them, show, when viewed from behind or in front, a

good bit of "daylight" between the knee and the flap on each side. The rider who wishes to obtain a "strong" seat should, therefore, keep his feet in a position that will give him the advantage of both holds ; which, usually, will be obtained when the toes are neither turned in nor out ; that is, when the feet are kept parallel to the horse's sides. Also, in this position, the rider who wears spurs will not be so liable to involuntarily touch his horse with them, as he would be, were his toes turned out, in the event of the animal jumping, or "playing up." The usual tendency, even of good horsemen, is to turn the toes too much out ; hence the learner will do well to endeavour to cultivate the habit of keeping his feet parallel to the horse's sides. Even if, from the formation of his limbs, he sits most comfortably and securely when his toes are turned a trifle out ; still it will be well for him, in practice, to try to err on the safe side.

In order that the rider's weight may be carried to the best possible advantage, it is essential that there should be a firm connection between the horse and the rider at the moment of propulsion ; for if this does not exist, the body will be jerked back, instead of being carried evenly forward at each stride. Hence, this connection should be preserved by the grip of the knees, and—as pointed out before—of

the calves of the legs, and not by bearing the weight on the stirrups.

In order to preserve adequate stability of seat, the rider should get his rump well under him, and should sit on it ; for if he sticks his rump out behind, and leans his weight forward, he will simply convert his knees, or, much more likely, his stirrup irons, into pivots, round which his body will revolve forward, on the horse making any violent or unexpected movement. The body should be kept erect by the "play" of the hip joints, and not by hollowing out the back ; for that would cause the rump to be stuck out behind, instead of being carried beneath the centre of gravity of the body. In order to obtain increased grip, the fork should be forced well down into the saddle, with the hollow, and not the back of the thighs against the sides of the animal.

The feet should on no account be stuck out to the front. As a rule, the leg from the knee to the foot should be perpendicular ; or, at least, the rider should endeavour to keep it so, in order to avoid any forward jerk being thrown on the stirrups, which, by its reaction on them, would tend to throw the weight of the rider back, and would then, to some extent, interfere with the movements of the horse.

The feet are often carried unduly forward, with the unconscious object of obtaining an increased bearing

on the stirrups, the result of which will be that the rider will be liable to be bumped up and down in the saddle at each stride, by reason of the rigid nature of the stirrup leathers. This action on the part of the man, cannot fail to have a retarding and injurious effect on the movements of the animal. If, on the contrary, he keeps his thighs sloped and his legs, from the knee down, in a vertical position, the "play" of the knee joints will tend to obviate the jerk communicated, by the stirrups, to the legs.

I must, however, admit that many fair horsemen stick their feet out too much in front. Almost everyone does so, when going slow and when the horse is not pulling; for then there is no immediate necessity for sitting well into the saddle. Omitting persons who are, apparently, independent of all rule, I say with confidence that no really fine horseman sticks his feet out in front, when he "jams" himself into the saddle and rides "all he knows." The anatomical reason why it is bad horsemanship to stick out the feet in front, is that, by doing so, the leg is made more or less straight, in which condition the knee and thigh is rendered round and not flat, as it would be, were the knee bent. For grip, we naturally require a flat and not a round surface of knee and thigh.

The heels should be somewhat depressed, so as to in-

crease the grip of the calves of the legs. If the toes point in a downward direction, the muscles of the calves will thereby be rendered flaccid. The feet should be kept in the same vertical plane as the knees ; or, if anything, they may be carried a little outwards ; for if the feet be brought close to the animal's sides, the grip of the knees will necessarily be loosened. If, on the contrary, the feet be carried too far away from the sides of the horse, the calves of the legs will obtain no hold on the flaps of the saddle.

The knees and feet, except when touching the horse with the heels, ought to be kept quite steady, and on no account be allowed to work backwards and forwards. The shoulders should be kept square to the front, and "down" ; the body and head erect ; and the loins braced up, but without any approach to stiffness in the attitude. The rider will then be in the best position in which to conform to the movements of his animal, and in a difficult one from which to be dislodged. The muscles of the hands, arms, and shoulders should be free from all stiffness, so that the rider may "give and take" with every movement of the horse's head and neck ; and the elbows should work close to the sides. The act of sticking out the elbows is not alone ungraceful ; but it also causes the arms to work at a

FIG. 19.



To face page 30.

FIG. 20.



To face page 32.

mechanical disadvantage, and obliges the rider to "round" his shoulders, which is an action that will interfere with the free play of the body.

Although it is impossible for all riders to observe every one of these details with mathematical accuracy; still, the closer they are followed, the better will be the seat.

A great point about riding is to avoid all stiffness in the attitude assumed on horseback; for the muscles of the animal being in a constant state of motion, rigidity of those of the rider would naturally prevent him from accurately conforming to the movements of his mount.

Having described the seat of a rider from a general point of view, I would wish to direct particular attention to the fact that the position of a man on horseback should vary according as the animal "pulls"; for—other things being equal—the greater the strain on the reins, the more will the horse carry his weight back, or to use a "school" phrase, the more will the forehand be lightened. Hence, when a horse pulls hard, the body should be brought more forward, and, consequently, the feet further back, than when the reins are comparatively slack. Mr. Oswald Brown has endeavoured to show these differences in Figs. 19 and 20. When, however, a horse, as horses often will do, gets his head down, and unduly throws his weight on his forehand,

the rider may try to counteract this by leaning a little back.

A man should ride by the combined aid of *balance* and *grip*; the latter, from the thighs, knees, and calves of the legs, being only just sufficient to assist the former in retaining the body in proper position. By this means, any disturbing sway of the body will be prevented, while the muscles of the legs of the rider will remain untired, and consequently capable of gripping the saddle, in a moment, with the tenacity of a vice, in the event of the animal making any untoward movement.

The military seat requires "body and head erect and square to the front, neither leaning backward nor forward, the shoulders well thrown back, chest advanced, small of the back bent forward, the leg and thigh well down from the hips, the flat side of the thigh placed to the saddle, legs near the sides of the horse, the heels to be well stretched down, toes raised from the instep and as near the horse's side as the heels. A plummet line from the front point of the shoulder should fall an inch behind the heel." This seat, I may remark, has to be maintained by balance, rather than by grip, for which it offers but little facility.

The length of the stirrups, with the seat described, will enable the rider to clear the pommel of the saddle easily

when standing up in them, and, as a general rule, will cause the lower part of the stirrup irons to reach a little below the ankle joints, when the feet are taken out of the stirrups and allowed to hang down. In short, the length of the stirrups should be such as will assist the horseman in assuming a perfect seat, and cannot be determined by any fixed measurement. If the rider finds that when on a puller, at the gallop, he can get his knees well into the flaps of the saddle, draw his feet back, and in this manner exert his strength to the best advantage, he may rest assured that his stirrups are of the right length. Short men will, usually, require comparatively long stirrups, and will be obliged to get their feet more forward than those of an opposite conformation; for they need an increased amount of grip from the calf of the leg to aid that from the thigh and knee, and will, consequently, ride with a straighter leg. Men with long legs will, generally, have to ride comparatively short, so as to obtain grip from the calf of the leg.

After a little practice, the rider will be able to get the approximative length of his stirrups, before mounting, by measuring them with his arm. This will be about the distance of the tip of the fingers to the arm-pit, when the arm is held straight. The form of the horse or saddle may cause this length to vary a little one way or the other.

Except for school-riding, one should ride with the feet home in the stirrups, when going faster than the trot, at which pace the ball of the foot may rest on the iron, so that the ankle joint may "give" to the motion of the rider, when he rises in his stirrups.

When a rider is shifted in his seat, or falls off in the ordinary manner, he has a tendency to go, more or less, heels over head, as many of us know from practical experience. This is naturally caused by the portion of the weight which is free to go forward, being above the centre of gravity of the body, while that from which the grip is obtained, by the legs, is well below it. The more, therefore, at any untoward movement of the horse, the rider brings his shoulders back, gets his seat beneath, not behind, the centre of gravity, and grips with his legs, so that the line of resistance to the onward motion may be as near the centre of gravity of the body as possible, the better chance will he have of remaining unshifted in his saddle. Hence the necessity of bringing the shoulders back by the play of the hips, and not by hollowing out the small of the back ; of having the thighs well sloped, knees well forward, and the feet not advanced ; for if they be thrust to the front, and the speed of the horse be checked at any moment, they will be forced on to the stirrups, and the resulting jerk

will have every chance of toppling the rider over. If, on the contrary, the shock falls on the legs, when the feet are in proper position, the "play" of the thighs, between which the saddle is forced as a wedge, will materially obviate the disturbing influence.

I have made the foregoing remarks with reference to men of ordinary height and fair length of limb.

Position of the hands.—Whether one or both hands be used, it or they should be allowed to fall loosely from the wrist, with the line of the knuckles at an angle of about forty-five degrees with the ground (see page 2). When only one hand is employed, it should work, as nearly as possible, directly over the withers, so that an "even feeling" be kept on both sides of the mouth. When the two hands are on the reins, they should be kept eight or nine inches apart, and should be held one on each side of the withers, or but slightly raised. In all cases—except at a finish in a race, or when a horse bucks, kicks, or gets his head too low—the hands should be kept "down," in order to prevent the horse from carrying his head too high; for if he does so, he will, by altering the direction of the muscles of the neck—among which are those that draw the fore limbs forward—cause the horse to go too "high" in front and thereby shorten his stride.

Conforming to the motion of the horse.—As the centre of gravity of the combined weight of horse and rider is nearer the fore legs than the hind, and is lower in position than the hip joints, through which the force of propulsion chiefly takes place ; it follows that in movements which necessitate, during a portion of the stride, both fore feet being off the ground, the muscles of the loins must raise the forehand, so as to place the centre of gravity in the best possible position to be projected forward. It is evident, that while this lever (of the third order) is working, the muscles of the loins will act best, if the weight of the rider be carried back. In galloping, this “lift” is made simultaneously with the act of forward propulsion by the hind limbs, which, I may remark, it precedes, when the horse makes a standing high jump. This lift and propulsion are accomplished by the extension of the loins and of the hind limbs. When the loins are being flexed, and the hind limbs are being brought under the body, previous to their “stroke” being made, it is advantageous from a mechanical point of view, that the weight of the rider should be carried forward. This, then, in very general terms, is the *rationale* of “conforming to the movements of the horse.” As the head and neck of the animal act in concert with the movements of the hind limbs, the

intelligent rider will soon learn from the "feel" of the reins, when he is going fast, to move with the horse, so that his weight may be carried smoothly. The fact that this act of conforming to the movements of the animal is mechanically advantageous, is amply proved by the injurious effect "dead weight" has on a horse's staying power. For instance, suppose that two horses of equal merits were to be ridden by two capable and equally good jockeys, and that although they were to carry the same weight, one, being lighter than the other, had to put up, say, two stone of lead, it is absolutely certain, if both were to ride the race in the same way, that the jockey who had to carry "dead weight," would lose.

As the centre of gravity of the rider is above the saddle, it follows that at each "stroke" of the horse's hind limbs (which nearly, though not quite, act together during the gallop), the rider's weight, unless prevented from doing so, would be jerked back, to the evident detriment of the animal's speed. The good horseman, however, by the grip of the knees, by the movement of the body, and by his hold on the reins, "gives" to the motion of the horse, and thus prevents any jerk or bumping taking place.

Good hands.—Every horseman should endeavour to acquire the possession of "good hands," which term is em-

ployed to express the happy knack of using the reins so as to restrain the horse by delicate manipulation, and not by mere hauling at the mouth ; and to enable the rider to conform to the movements of his mount, in the best possible manner. Unless one has a sufficiently strong seat to enable one to be independent of the reins for remaining in the saddle, and has an unruffled temper and abundance of patience, it is impossible to have "good hands."

The effect of the "magic touch" of the artist is as apparent on the reins, as it is on the bow of the violin, the brush of the painter, or on the cue of the billiard expert ; yet few and imperfect have been the efforts to investigate this most important of all subjects to the horseman. It may be readily granted that written directions alone are useless to teach the art ; but they, if correct, may serve as important guides to practice. The two following methods are the chief ones that are employed, often unconsciously, on different kinds of horses, by men who possess the magic touch on the reins.

I. When the horse pulls at them, they "give" to him, with such quickness that the animal thinks he has overcome all resistance, and consequently brings his head into its natural position, which is the one in which the mouth-piece will act most forcibly. At this moment, a pull is

taken, and if the horse makes another "snatch" at the reins, he is again baffled ; and so on, until he finds that it is best for him to yield the point gracefully. A horse hates opposition, and, if unruly, will always fight against it, as long as he thinks he is getting the best of the battle, or is, at least, holding his own. As an illustration, I may mention that some horses learn the trick of hanging back against their head-collar chain in the stable, and will, hour after hour, and year after year, do their best to pull their heads off in their endeavour to break it. Yet, if we tie up the chain short with a piece of twine, when the animal is in the stable, we shall, as a rule, find that when he throws his weight against the head-collar, and consequently breaks the twine, he will imagine himself free, and will cease to pull against the chain, which binds him, all the same, to the manger. Thus it is with those animals that "snatch" at the bridle.

2. When a horse keeps a heavy, dead pull on the reins, the artist will forcibly prevent him from advancing his head beyond a certain point ; but the moment the animal yields the slightest bit, by bending his neck and loosening his jaw, the man of the magic touch will reward his obedience by "giving" to him ; *but not till then*. In fact, he will make his hands perform the part of the standing

martingale (fixed on the rings of the snaffle), which will teach a horse to bend his neck, in order to save his mouth (See *Illustrated Horse-Breaking*, page 70—Thacker & Co., London ; and Thacker, Spink & Co., Calcutta). The reader may ask : “If the horse pulls too hard, what is the rider to do?” The answer to this is, that he should try to “lighten” the animal’s forehand by a judicious use of the whip or of the spurs. Suppose a horse is fond of kicking, what is the best way to provoke him to “lash out?” To spur or hit him far back will, of course, be the answer. If he be inclined to rear, what, may we ask, should be done to make him stand upright? Spur, or hit him in front, and take a pull at him, will be the natural reply. I may remark that a horse rears because he lightens his forehand too much ; and that, when he kicks, his hind quarters are too “light.” When he keeps a “dead” pull on the reins and holds his head low, his forehand is heavy, and his hind quarters are light. When a horse pulls hard with his head high in the air, the reverse is the case. Such unequal distribution of weight should be corrected by the combined use of the spurs or whip, and reins.

“*Bumping*” up and down in the saddle, which is often caused, when going at a canter or gallop by the rider sticking out his feet and keeping his legs straight, is, also,

frequently due to the rider maintaining a rigid hold on the reins, which causes him to be pulled forward, by the animal advancing its head, at the moment its hind quarters make their stroke at each stride. When it bends its neck and draws its hind quarters under it, he naturally falls back again into his saddle.

Legs and hands as "aids."—The use of the rider's legs as an "aid," is to support and to "lighten," so that the weight may be distributed in a proper manner between the hind and fore extremities. If we turn the horse solely by the rein, say to the right, we shall have the revolution made, more on the forehand, than would occur, were it performed by the spontaneous action of the animal itself. The quicker the forward movement has been, and the sharper the turn, the more will the hind quarters be swung round to the left, and the greater will be the consequent danger of the horse losing his balance and falling. The risk of such an accident is naturally heightened by the fact of a rider being on the animal's back; because the position of the horseman tends to disturb the distribution of weight between the fore and hind limbs, by unduly throwing it on the former. Hence, in turning, say, to the right, the horse's hind quarters should be "supported" by the left leg. The indication, rather than the

actual support, is no doubt by far the most valuable part of the aid given by the rider. If the animal be thoroughly trained, a light pressure of the leg, a little behind the girth, will be sufficient. With horses of less education, we may have to draw back the leg and then apply the heel, or spur, so as to warn the horse not to allow his hind quarters to fly round too much.

If a horse happens to turn too rapidly round on his haunches, say, to the right, the proper support would naturally be with the right foot against the off side of the forehand; for here we have a case opposite to that of turning on the forehand.

As the horse's body is in a horizontal position when he makes all ordinary turns; it follows that if we support one side of the hind quarters, we should, also, support the opposite side of the forehand with the other leg. Hence, if we draw back the right leg to support the off quarter (when turning to the left), we should, at the same time, advance the left foot to support the near side of the forehand, and *vice versa*.

If a horse be inclined to kick, the readiest way to make him do so, as we have seen, is to spur or hit him far back. When he "lashes out" in response to the stimulus, he "lightens" his hind quarters, and throws weight on his fore-

hand. If he be fond of rearing and if we wish to make him "get up on his hind legs," the spur or whip should be applied well in front, so as to induce him to lighten his forehand. When a horse pulls hard, an unusual preponderance of weight will be on his forehand, which we should endeavour to lighten by the touch of the foot or whip. If a horse refuses to rein back, his hind quarters, on the contrary, will require to be stimulated. If we attempt to accomplish our object, solely by the effect of the rein either with a puller or with an animal which refuses to rein back, the requisite amount of muscular force (even if it can be obtained) will be far greater than what would be necessary, were, respectively, the forehand or hind quarters, previously lightened. Hence the action of the leg should, in such cases, precede that of the rein.

As the muscles on the top of the loins are particularly concerned in raising the forehand, during the gallop or canter, so as to accommodate the position of the centre of gravity to the propulsion (which is given through the hip-joints) of the hind limbs, we find that these loin muscles are the first to tire, owing to the preponderance of weight (due to the rider's position) being on the forehand. Hence, to equalise this distribution of weight, we should, in this case, endeavour to lighten the forehand by a touch of the

foot and by a good hold of the reins. In fact, the more tired the horse becomes, the more decided should be the indication, and the better should be the "hold" we should have of his head. These "aids" are specially called for, when going through heavy ground, in which the animal's fore-legs will, owing to the preponderance of weight being on the forehand, unduly sink; and when coming up to a high fence, especially on a tired horse, in which case the loin muscles will be severely taxed in raising the forehand, which, consequently, should be made as light as possible.

The pressure of the rider's legs against the horse's sides serves as an "aid," not only in the just distribution of weight between the fore and hind limbs; but also in preventing the animal, especially at fast paces and when tired, from swaying the body from side to side, out of the line of the direction in which he is going. The act of making a horse by means of the hands and legs as aids, carry himself in a well-balanced ("collected") manner, while taking a nice hold of the bit, is called "riding a horse up to his bridle."

When cantering on a circle, which is, simply, turning in a gradual manner, the animal's head should be bent in the direction in which he is going,—so that he may preserve his balance and see where he is proceeding—and the "outward" leg should be applied to the hind quarter.

The outward rein should give support to the muscles of the neck, and the inward rein and leg should aid the horse in preserving the curve upon which he is proceeding. Suppose that the animal is cantering on a circle to the right and that the rider has both hands on the reins ; the horse will then be leading with the off fore ; the rider's left leg will be applied to the horse's near side a little further back than usual ; the right leg will be slightly more forward ; the right hand will preserve the bend of the neck, and will be somewhat lowered ; the left hand will be a little raised, and will keep the rein pressed against the neck ; and the body will be slightly inclined inwards. When the horse canters or gallops to the left, the aids will be reversed. When we wish to make the horse strike off from the halt, walk or trot, into a canter with either fore leg leading, we should apply the aids suitable to the circle in which that leg leads. For instance, if we want him to lead with the off fore, we should apply those of the circle right, and *vice versa*. I have found it a good method—the indication of which is soon learned by the horse—to touch the animal with the toe near the elbow of the leg with which I have wanted him to lead. If we desire to make the animal change the leading leg, and if he will not do this readily we should bring him to a "half halt," and then make

him strike off under the influence of the proper aids. I am, here, assuming that the horse has had the advantage of some school teaching. If, however, his education has been neglected, we may, as a rule, get him to strike off correctly or to change promptly, by first teaching him to canter, with the proper leg leading, on both circles; taking care to use the correct aids in each. By gradually decreasing the diameter of the circle, we can soon make him lead with the proper leg. When he has learned to strike off with the correct leg in either circle, we may canter him in a figure of 8, so as to make him change according as the aids are reversed. By thus getting him acquainted with the meaning of our indications, we shall not be long in teaching him to change, or strike off as we wish.

To be convinced that using the aids properly, renders the task of the horse easier, we need but compare the difference in the way he carries a good rider, to that in which he travels under one who "sits like a sack."

Riding with a slack rein.—When the rider has to trust entirely to the honour of his animal to bear him safely out of difficulty, he ought, as a rule, to ride with a more or less loose rein, so that he may not bring both to grief by any undue interference.

Stock-driving in the Colonies, and pig-sticking in India,

furnish us with instances of the necessity, at times, of riding with the reins slack : a method which is practised at the expense of the speed and staying power of the horse. When a stockman, on a trained stock-horse, attempts to bring in stray and half-wild cattle, his mount, acting with intelligence almost equal to that of a shepherd's dog, gallops down the marked-out beast, turns as it turns, with the quickness of a coursed hare, and accomplishes his part of the driving-in with but the very slightest indication of his rider's wishes. While this exciting chase is going on, the man restricts himself to the use of his long stock-whip on the beast as required, sits still, lets the reins slack, and watches it and not the horse, so that he may be prepared for any twist, turn, or sudden stop made by the latter, whose movements, he is well aware, will correspond to similar ones made by the former. It would be extremely difficult for him, with his eyes on the horse, to know what his mount was going to do under such circumstances. Out pig-sticking over the black cotton soil which is met with in the Central Provinces of India, and which has numberless holes and fissures on its surface, and across ground covered with large loose stones, such as at Paunchgawm, not far from Nagpore, and over the low hills near Allahabad, the rider

cannot avoid a "purl," if he goes straight, unless he is on a trained pig-sticker, and allows perfect freedom to its head. If he does this, the clever animal will pick its way, almost at racing pace, over holes and stones without making a mistake. The rider has here, also, to watch the pursued one, so as to be prepared for every "jink." I need hardly say that when a horse has to gallop over ground such as I have described, or after cattle out stock-driving, no rider who keeps a tight hold of the reins could, possibly, avoid "pulling its mouth about," and, consequently, bringing them both to grief; for the animal, when picking its way, would have to lengthen or shorten its stride, turn or stop, quicker than its rider could foresee. The old school of hunting men in Ireland used to ride with a slack rein. The hounds ran slow, and the men preferred to watch the hunting, rather than to devote their attention to riding; so left the horses to do all the work without assistance. A high degree of sagacity was developed in them by trusting 'to their honour, and making them use their own understanding, without expecting assistance from their riders at every turn. Hence arose that peculiar cleverness possessed by the old Irish hunter, such as Signal, Fencer, Whisky and Mickey Free, who were famous in Muskerry many years ago.

We frequently meet with instances of extraordinary clever horses being very impetuous. Some of them will brook no interference with their mouths. On one of this sort, a meddlesome rider is certain to be brought to speedy grief. Horses, on the contrary, which are accustomed to a tight rein, often cannot keep on their legs over obstacles, or over bad ground, without its aid.

If the rider gives the horse his head, the intelligent animal will soon learn to look out for himself, will check his pace and get his hind legs under him before "taking off;" for horses dislike falling nearly as much as their riders do. I need hardly say that when a horse has to "collect himself," and has to gallop without any assistance from the bridle, that he does so by the expenditure of a large amount of force, which would be saved were he ridden up to his bit. Besides this, he will jump "stickily" at his fences, and be slow at getting away from them.



CHAPTER IV.

FIRST LESSONS IN RIDING.

Commencing to Ride—Riding Without Reins—Management of the Reins—To Start from the halt—To Trot—To Canter—To Gallop—To pull up—To turn the Horse—Holding a puller—To rein back—Keeping a Horse Straight—Going up or down hill—Swimming the Horse—Picking up Objects from off the Ground when on Horseback.

Commencing to ride.—It is not at all imperative for a person to begin early in life in order to become a good, or even a finished horseman. Some of the straightest riders I have known, never mounted a horse before they were twenty-one or even older. I must, however, admit that even they did not possess that extraordinary strength of seat which I have observed only among those who began to ride when they were boys. I attribute this to the fact that a high degree of proficiency in the art of balancing oneself can be acquired only when a commencement is made in early youth. Riding is so essentially an affair of nerve and balance, that it is hopeless to expect to become a brilliant performer in the saddle,

unless one learns before one knows what fear is, and before one's joints have lost their pliability. Practice, however, can do a great deal, even to putting a man's heart in the right place ; for the more familiarised we are with any form of danger, the less do we regard it.

Boys who have the opportunity, usually commence their first lessons in equitation on a donkey, or small pony, and by dint of many falls, and a little advice, get "shaken into their saddles." I well remember, when I was a small boy of eight or nine, my father's coachman, whom I regarded, at that time, as the highest authority on riding in the world, repeatedly telling me that I should never be able to ride until I had seventy-seven falls. I unfortunately lost count when I got into the twenties, so cannot exactly tell whether he was right or wrong ; although I am certain that the "spills" I had, made me all the more keen. I believe that a few falls, provided that they are not too severe, do a strong, stout-hearted boy a great deal of good, when he is learning to ride ; but, if the beginner be a man, or delicate youth, they are apt to destroy his confidence, which is all essential in riding. A bad fall, on the contrary, will act prejudicially in all cases. This fact is well recognised among jockeys, some of whom I have heard remark about Archer, when alluding to his extraordinary pluck, that he

retained his nerve, because he had not met with a bad accident.

In order to give the grown-up beginner confidence, I would strongly advise that, to commence with, he should be put on a very easy horse, have a comfortable, broad-seated saddle covered with buckskin, and that he should be allowed to ride, at first, with stirrups. After a time, he might try the ordinary pigskin saddle, and have a change of horses. I may observe that the greater the variety of horses a man rides, the quicker will he acquire a strong seat. He should, above all things, avoid, from the very first, depending on the bridle for support; for that trick, once learned, will be very difficult, if not impossible, to be given up. He should try to ride by balance, and not by grip; for if a continued effort be demanded of any set of muscles, they will, after a while, lose their wonted power, and be unable to act at, perhaps, the very moment their aid is required to save the rider from an accident. As soon as he feels somewhat "at home" in the saddle with stirrups, he should try to do without them, until he is able to ride perfectly well in this manner. He should, at first, take them up for only a short time, but should lengthen the period as he improves, until he can ride in perfect safety and comfort, without the aid of the stirrups. Having

acquired the necessary proficiency, there will be no object in his practising any longer in this way. The respective seats and styles of riding, with and without stirrups, differ so much, one from the other, that a man should thoroughly accustom himself only to the method (that with stirrups) he will habitually use. He should never, if he can help it, continue riding after he has become tired ; for he will then be unable to maintain a proper seat, and will be apt to acquire a slovenly style. "The advantage of this mode of instruction (riding without stirrups) is, that it teaches, or, in fact obliges, a boy to balance his body, and sit still and firm in his seat, without any other aid than Nature has supplied him with ; and it obliges him to keep his legs motionless, for should he hold so loosely by his knees and thighs as to allow his legs to move or swing backwards and forwards on his saddle skirts, they would allow him to roll over the one or other side of the horse, and then the 'hope of the family' might be turned topsy-turvy. The next advantage derived from this plan is, it finally, in riding terms, gives a lad 'hands' ; for so soon as he has learned a firm seat, and got full confidence in this respect, his hands are as free and as much at liberty as if standing on the ground. For, however firm he may want to hold his horse by the head, to assist, support, or check him, he wants no hold by his

own hands as a support, or stay, to his own body."—*Harry Hicover*.

It is particularly difficult, if once acquired, to give up the wretched habit of "holding on by the reins," which is altogether incompatible with good horsemanship.

If a man has to ride in a light saddle, he should practise in one; for, however firm he may be in a ten or twelve pounds saddle, he will feel more or less uncomfortable and insecure in a racing or light steeplechase one, unless he be accustomed to it.

A beginner, when he feels insecure in the saddle, has often a strong tendency to steady himself by catching hold of the pommel, or even of the mane. If he requires some adventitious aid, he may be excused for putting one hand back and catching hold of the cantle of the saddle; for, by doing so, he will be enabled to keep his body from going forward, which is naturally the cause of the large majority of falls. If, however, he grasps the pommel or the mane, the fact of his doing so will cause the weight of his body to be carried forward. He will then, although probably able to preserve his balance while the horse is going straight on at a uniform pace, be almost certain to roll off, if the animal suddenly checks its speed, turns sharply, or makes any unexpected movement. His fall, in any of these cases,

will be accelerated by the fact of his holding on in front ; but would be retarded by his grasping the cantle, which is, after all, but a choice between two evils, and should, if possible, be avoided.

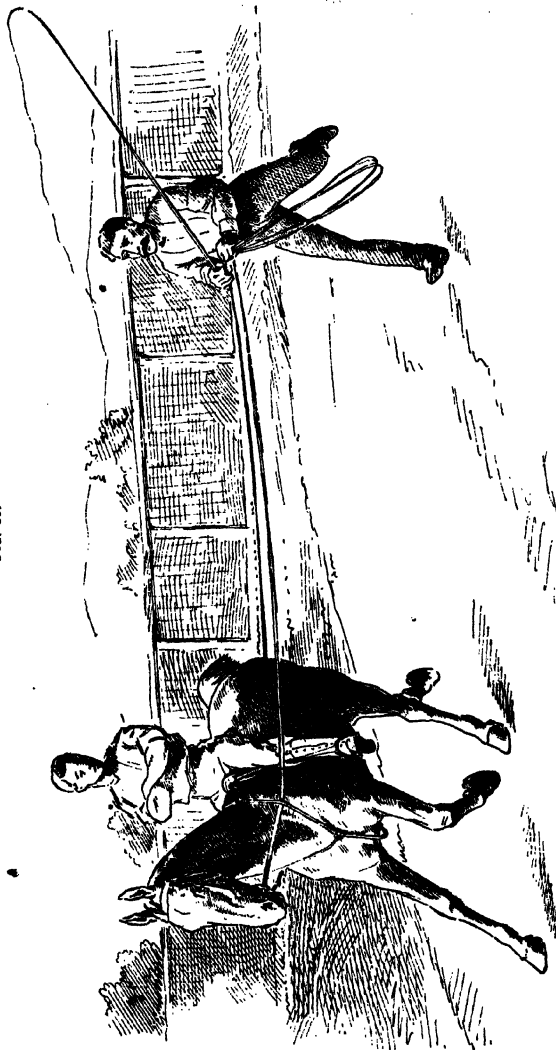
The rider who wears spurs, and finds, especially when jumping, that, from time to time, he touches his horse on the shoulders with them, may rest assured that his legs swing about, instead of remaining steady, and that he is but a very indifferent performer in the pigskin.

Riding without reins.—The best method of teaching the rudiments of riding, especially to grown-up persons unacquainted with the art, is by means of long reins on foot, which method, I believe, I have been the first to bring before the public. The gear used is an ordinary saddle ; a snaffle bridle ; a standing martingale attached to the rings of the snaffle and lengthened out, so as just to prevent, and no more, the horse from being able to shift the mouth-piece from the bars of the mouth on to the corners of the mouth ; and a pair of long reins, each being about twenty-two feet long and separate from the other. Before putting the learner up, the instructor should give the animal some preparatory practice, if it has not had it. To do this, he should stand to the left of the horse and a little to the rear of him, with the off rein through the off stirrup-iron and

round the horse's quarters, while the near rein may pass through the near stirrup-iron. Holding the reins in this manner, he should make him circle to the left ; turn him ; circle him to the right ; make him trot, walk ; and so on. I may mention that the object of passing the reins through the stirrup leather is merely to prevent them getting entangled in the horse's feet ; and that the method of teaching horses by the use of the long reins to go quietly and cleverly is fully described in my book, *Illustrated Horse-Breaking*.

Having got the horse to go quietly with the long reins, we may order our pupil to mount, and we may circle and turn the horse at a walk, while the pupil occupies himself entirely with his seat, as he will have no reins to hold (see Fig. 21.) If he be very timid we may allow him to hold the neck strap of the standing martingale, until he gains confidence. After a little we may proceed to make the animal trot, and turn sharply. Further on, the pupil may try to do all this without stirrups. We may then give a few jumping lessons. To do this, it is convenient for the fence to be open at the side, so that the instructor may not be impeded in his movements. A thick, heavy log of wood, about fifteen feet long, rounded so as not to be liable to injure the horse's legs, and propped up at each end with empty wine cases, will form a very suitable jump. The fact

FIG. 21.



of its being thick and heavy will, probably, prevent the horse from "chancing" it oftener than once. We may begin with it at about one foot high, and gradually raise it up to three feet six inches. When the pupil finds that he has a thoroughly firm seat under this practice, he may be safely entrusted with the reins. I need hardly point out the immense advantage this method has of teaching a person to ride without holding on to the reins. It has, also, the further merit that, if the instructor be expert, it is impossible for the horse to "break away," or to perform many antics that he might do even with a good rider who had sole control; for the man on foot has far more power over the animal than he would have, were he on its back.

Management of the reins.—I have described, at the beginning of this book, how the reins ought to be held, and the position of the hands, on page 35. The rider ought, at all times, to give the horse the indication of his wishes in the clearest possible manner. If he wants him to go to the right, he should pull the right rein; if to the left, the left rein. In military riding, however, the reins being held in one hand, the little finger separating them, it is impossible for this direct indication to be given; for do what the trooper will, he can shorten the near rein only to an extent equal to the thickness of his little finger, say three-

quarters of an inch, which it would be absurd to suppose would be sufficient to *oblige* the horse to turn his head round to the left. As for the right rein, it can hardly be shortened at all. Hence, the pressure of the reins on the neck has to be used as an indication for turning. Thus, if the cavalrman wants his horse to go to the right, he presses the near rein on the near side of the neck, and *vice versa*. His horse, if well trained, will obey this reversed (if I may use the expression) indication in an admirable manner, even in the excitement of "action." A high-spirited, generous-going horse, however bitted and trained in the best possible manner for *ordinary* riding, would, almost to a certainty, fail to obey such a faint and indirect indication, if at all excited—for instance, by the music of the hounds in the hunting-field—for the simple reason that he is not afraid, like the well-trained charger, to go boldly up to his bit. By saying this, I trust I do not offend any of my cavalry readers; for such is not my intention. Being an old Field Gunner, I know how admirably military equitation is taught in the mounted branches of our Service; so I hope I shall hurt no one's feelings, if I say that a horse would be useless in the ranks, if he were to go up to his bit in the manner desirable in the thoroughbred hunter or chaser.

The rider should, as a rule, and as I have elsewhere

advised, always keep both hands on the reins ; for their combined aid may, at any time, be needed, especially when crossing a country.

To start from the halt.—As the horse has a longer rein when standing than when walking, or going at any other faster pace, the rider should draw up the reins and close the legs, so as to send the horse up to his bridle. He may make him go on by touching him with his heels, or by speaking to him.

To trot.—To make the horse trot, the rider should lower his hands, keep a somewhat dead (forgive me the word !) pull on the horse's mouth, close the legs, and may indicate, by slightly rising in his stirrups, his wishes to the animal. The feet may be placed in the stirrup irons only as far as the ball of the foot, so as to ease, by the play of the ankle joints, the up-and-down action of rising in the stirrups. When the horse is not pulling, the body ought to be inclined slightly forwards. If the horse pulls, the rider may lean a little back. I do not know what word to substitute for the objectionable one of "dead pull." Although the expression may jar on the horseman's ear ; still, not one trotter in fifty will go fast, and maintain an even, level gait, if the rider keeps a light give-and-take feeling on the reins. The majority of fast trotters are hard pullers ; though some

of them will slacken speed the moment the rider stops pulling against them. The knack (an easy one) of rising in the stirrups can be learned only by practice. One should endeavour to time the rise and fall of the body accurately with the movements of the horse's fore legs. The up-and-down motion of the rider should be only just sufficient to relieve the action of the horse, and should be performed in an easy, graceful manner. The non-military rider should always rise in his stirrups at the trot ; as it is fatiguing both to the horse and to himself, as well as un-English, to bump up and down.

To canter.—We may make the horse strike off into a steady canter, if we feel his mouth lightly, with the hands somewhat raised ; sit down in the saddle ; lean a little back ; and apply the right foot to the animal's forehand on the off side, and the left foot a little behind the girth on the near side ; supposing that we want him to lead with the off fore, and *vice versa*. Although it is immaterial, from a horseman's point of view, with which fore leg a horse leads ; still many (absurdly, I venture to think) consider it fashionable for him to do so only with the off fore. This is quite right, when the horse has to carry a delicate lady who does not want to be shaken ; although it ought to be a matter of indifference to a "work-

man," unless the horse is about to turn to the left, or is cantering in a circle to the left.

To gallop.—The seat at the gallop differs but little from that at the canter; except, that in the latter, the rider should, as a rule, lean his shoulders more back, than in the former. The object of this, in the canter, is to save from undue jar the leading fore leg, upon which the horse, at each stride alights, and dwells for a comparatively long period, until the non-leading leg is brought down. This interval is much shorter in the gallop, which is a pace of four time; the canter being one of three, namely, (1) off fore, when this leg leads; (2) near fore and off hind; (3) near hind.

To pull up.—The horse should be pulled up gradually, so that the suspensory ligaments of his fore legs may not be jarred. The legs should first be closed, with the feet slightly forward, so as to lighten the forehand; the reins should be felt; and the shoulders drawn back.

To turn the horse.—Give the proper indication with the legs (see page 41), so that the horse may turn in a collected and well-balanced manner, and that he may "change," if, at the canter or gallop, he is leading with the foot away from the turn (for instance, with the off fore, when a turn to the left has to be made); take a pull at the inward rein, supporting the horse's neck

with the outer one ; and lean the body back and a little towards the side to which the turn is being made. The pull on the inward rein should be steady, and without any jerk. On account of the rider's weight being borne more by the fore than by the hind extremities, the natural balance of the animal's frame is disturbed for turning by the fact of a man being on his back ; hence, the rider should endeavour to restore it, as much as he can, for the moment. A horse can hardly make a mistake by turning too much on his hind legs ; though nothing is easier than for him to get a bad fall, if he be allowed to turn sharply when going in an uncollected manner.

Holding a puller.—See page 85.

To rein back.—When a horse refuses to rein back, he accomplishes his purpose by fixing his hind legs against the ground. Hence, to make a horse readily rein back, we should “lighten” his hind quarters. If we bring his head round to the near side, we shall find that the preponderance of the weight of the hind quarters is thrown on the near hind, while the off hind is left freer to move than before ; and *vice versa*. The horse's movement to the rear, when performed in a “collected” manner, is one of two time, namely, (1) off hind and near fore, and (2) near hind and off fore. Therefore, to lighten the hind quarters in the

rein back, we should, immediately before the horse makes one of his diagonal steps, feel the rein of the side opposite to that of which the hind leg moves to the rear. Thus, the near rein should be felt for the off hind and near fore step; and *vice versa*. In order to keep the horse in a straight line when going to the rear, the rider should apply his right leg to the horse's off side, when he feels the near rein; and *vice versa*. As we want the fore leg of the diagonal pair to move in unison with its opposite hind fellow, we should lighten it, by touching it with our foot, during the rein back. As I have pointed out on page 43, the process of lightening the fore hand and hind quarters, should precede the action of the reins. The application of the "aids" in the rein back are as follows:—(1) Left foot a little advanced and touching the lower part of the horse's shoulder; right foot a little drawn back and touching the horse's side; both reins felt, but the near rein the stronger of the two, so as to turn the animal's head slightly to the left. (2) In the next step, the aids are exactly opposite to those just described; then another pull is taken: and so on.

Reining back is an admirable practice for teaching the horse to "collect" himself.

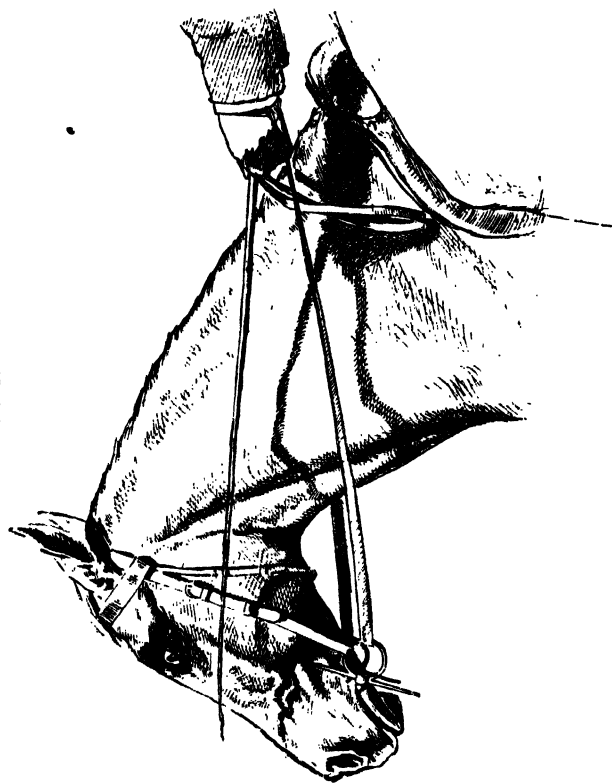
Keeping a horse straight.—It often happens, even with the steadiest of horses, that, when proceeding forward, the animal, from some cause or other, suddenly swerves

off to one side, say, to the right. In this case, if the rider wants to keep on in the original direction, he should feel both reins, the left the stronger, and should pull the horse's head round to the left, by lowering the left hand and raising the right hand, while bringing the right rein hard against the animal's neck. A decided jerk on the left rein will often have a good effect. The right leg should be applied to the side, with a touch of the spur if necessary. These "aids" will, of course, be reversed for a swerve to the left.

When a horse bears off to one side, which frequently happens in race riding, the rider may hold his whip parallel to the animal's neck and face in the hand of the side, say the left, to which he is swerving. The left hand, which holds the whip, should hold the near rein back-handed (see Fig. 22), in the same manner as the right hand holds the off rein.

Going up or down hill.—If the ascent be steep, catch hold of the mane with one hand, lean well forward, grip the saddle tightly with the knees, avoid putting any weight on the stirrups; for doing so would be very apt to cause the saddle to shift in its position backward, and leave the reins perfectly loose. The horse may be allowed to take a zigzag course. When going down a steep hill take a good hold of the horse's head, so as to make him get his hind quarters under him, grip tightly with the

FIG. 22.



To face page 64.



To face page 65.

legs, draw the feet back, lean as far back as possible, and let the horse go straight down, and not obliquely. If he happens to slip when proceeding in the former manner, he will in all probability merely let himself down on his hind quarters ; but, if in the latter, he may fall on his side and roll over.

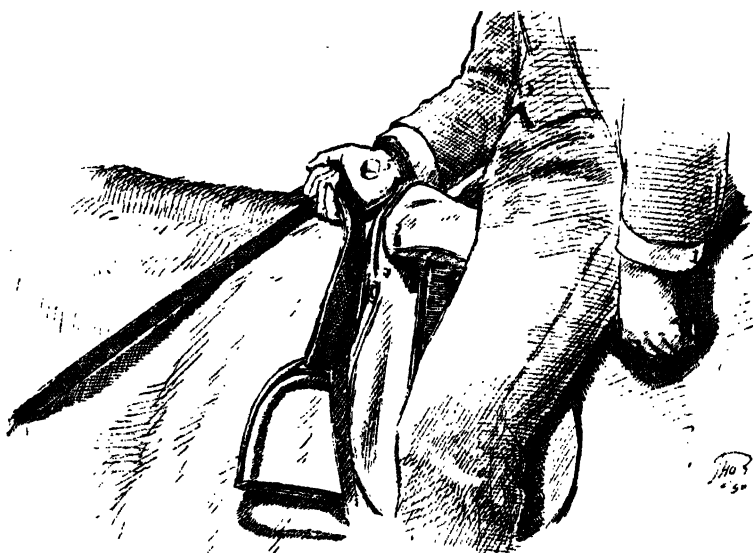
Swimming the horse.—Take the feet out of the stirrups, leave the reins slack, and hold on by the mane. Or, get off the saddle, and hold on by the pommel or by the mane with one hand, while with the other one try to guide the horse to one side by lightly touching the reins, and to the other side by slightly splashing him with water. Or hold on to the tail.

Picking up objects from off the ground when on horseback.—If, when on horseback, we wish to pick up, without dismounting, an object, such as a whip or pocket-handkerchief, say, with the left hand, we may do so by catching a good hold of the mane with the right hand ; taking the right foot out of the stirrup ; bending over to the near side, so as to catch the off side of the cantle with the right heel ; and by the aid thus afforded, pick up the object (see Figs. 23 and 24). It is almost needless to say, that the horse employed must be particularly steady.

Another method which is specially applicable with a

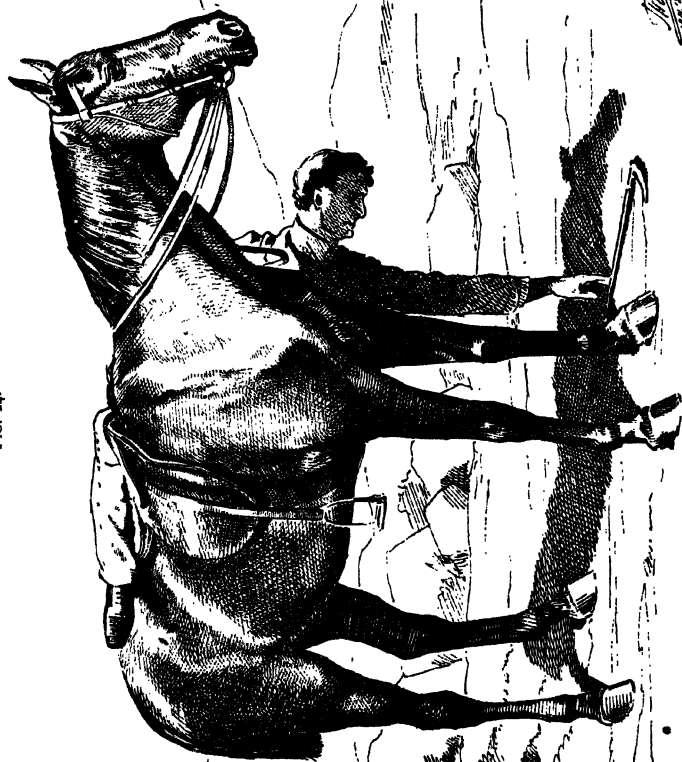
horse or pony that has had its mane clipped off, is to take, with the right hand, a back-handed hold of the right stirrup leather (see Fig. 25), after having removed the right foot out of its iron, and then to reach down and pick up the object

Fig. 25.



with the left hand. The body can easily be drawn back into the saddle by means of the grip the right hand has on the off stirrup leather. With both methods the reins should be, in the first instance, passed into the right hand and drawn up, as may be required.

FIG. 24.



To face page 66.

CHAPTER V.

RIDING AND BRIDLING HORSES WHICH HAVE TRICKS
OR VICES.

Boring—Buck-jumping—Chucking up the Head—Difficult to Mount—
Kicking—Rearing—Jibbing—Pulling hard and Running away—
Shouldering—Shying—Stumbling.

IN this connection, I may remark that as I have in my *Illustrated Horse-Breaking*, described at considerable length what I have found to be the best methods of “making and breaking” horses, and for curing them of various faults of mouth and temper; I shall here limit my observations to the procedure a rider should adopt, if he finds his mount to be fractious and has got no time to break him.

The art of making horses which come under the above category, conform to the wishes of their rider, who, of course, ought to be a good horseman, is mainly dependent on the fact of his possessing “nerve,” “temper,” patience and firmness. It frequently happens that a man who in his youth “could have done anything” he

pleased with a horse, begins to lose his wonderful power the moment his nerve commences to "go." A hesitating manner in approaching, a trembling about the knees, or a nervous clutching at the reins when mounted, betrays the rider's secret, often before he is conscious of it himself, to the observant animal, which is only too ready to change its position of servant to that of master. Although our horses should never be allowed to oppose their wills to ours, still we should endeavour to obtain from them friendly obedience, rather than the sullen submission of cowed slaves ; for a horse's courage and intelligence are as needful to us as his speed and strength. No one who loses his temper, or is timid when in the saddle, deserves the name of a horseman.

Boring.—Some horses carry their heads too low down, generally from the effect of the continued use of the curb or Pelham (see page 208), while others bore to one side, sometimes to such an extent as to constitute "bolting off the course," or out of the line the rider wishes to take, from having been spoiled by bad riders. With the former, the ordinary or gag snaffle (see page 191) may be tried, or the cheekpieces of the headstall may be taken up a few holes. The latter, however, for comfortable riding, require something more than mechanical devices to cure

them of their unpleasant trick. All of us who have ridden much are aware that the large majority of horses have what is called a hard and a soft side to their mouths, the former being, generally, the right; the latter, the left. This is evidently owing to horses being led and handled, as a rule, on the near side; and to the fact that most riders use the left hand more than the right on the reins, which circumstances have a tendency to make the animal go with his neck, more or less, bent to the left. As many riders sit "anyhow" on a horse, with one leg advanced or drawn back more than another, it would be strange indeed if the ordinary animal were to escape some bias in his gait.

So-called stiffness of neck, or hardness of mouth, has nothing to do with the physical condition of the parts, but is simply a term to express the horse's inability to understand, an unwillingness to obey, the "indications" afforded by the rider.

When riding a horse which bores to one side, the rider, by holding one hand lower than the other, and by playing with the rein of the side to which the animal bears, may keep his neck straight, while he should not forget to make the horse, by means of his legs and, if need be, his spurs, carry his croup in a proper line. If the animal does not obey, the rider may, especially in a moment of need,

sharply jerk the rein of the side away from which the horse is boring, so as to make him bend his neck to save his mouth. A very heavy snaffle, double-ringed for choice, greatly increases the effect of this "job." A standing martingale, fixed on to the snaffle rings, will give the rider much additional power over a borer or refuser. A circle of stiff leather, about four inches in diameter, as used by many Hansom cabmen in London, may be placed on the mouthpiece of the ring snaffle on the side to which the animal bores, so that his head may be kept straight by the pressure afforded by the broad leather surface on the side of the mouth.

Buck-jumping.—This vice, which is practically unknown in England, is very common among Australian horses, which, I believe, have inherited it from the South American mustangs that were imported into the Colony during its early years. I have heard of instances of English, Indian, and even Arab horses "bucking;" but I have never met with a case of the sort in my own experience. The buck-jumper, with the quickness of thought, throws his head down between his fore legs: at the same moment he arches his back, bounds in the air with all four feet close together, either forwards, to one side, or, at times, even backwards, till he dislodges his

rider, or gets the saddle on to his neck, and, then, by throwing up his head, breaks the girths. Or he may get through his saddle, or buck till he tires himself out. I had a horse—aptly called Euclid—after throwing me, buck for quite five minutes all round and even over me, in the vain attempt to get rid of his saddle, while I lay prostrate on the ground, longing for him to go to some more suitable place in which to show off his antics. If the rider be unaccustomed to buck-jumpers, he will, generally, from the suddenness of the downward movement of the horse's head, be pulled more or less forward on to his neck. The convulsive cant given by the animal's loins will shift the man still more forward, and a few repetitions of the same action will complete the removal. I can say from experience that when a horse bucks, the rider becomes suddenly aware that there is nothing in front of the pommel of the saddle except a sheer precipice, while he feels himself chucked forward from behind. Some buck-jumpers are perfectly quiet to mount; but the moment they feel the rider's weight in the saddle, they will try all they know to throw him off. Others will not buck unless they are very fresh, or when under some unusual excitement. An Australian steeplechase mare, with which I won several races, always bucked with me—but never at other times—

RIDING VICIOUS HORSES.

if I happened, when riding her, to take a paper of any sort in my hand. The instant she heard the crackling sound it made, down went her head, and, if I did not come off, I generally had a very near escape of doing so. I believe I am correct in saying that, as a rule, there is no vice which the horse, if mastered a few times, forgets so readily as buck-jumping. Many Australians ride these horses to perfection, though men who have not learned during their youth to do so in the Colonies, very rarely acquire the knack.

Few even of the best Colonial rough riders can sit a bad buck-jumper in an ordinary English saddle; as they are accustomed to their own specially made ones (see Fig. 59), which give a much more secure seat than those of the ordinary hunting pattern. Steve Margaret, an Englishman who has lived for several years in Australia, is, however, an exception. He can ride the worst buck-jumper in an ordinary hunting-saddle.

If the rider finds that his horse is going to "put his back up," he may pull him sharply round, and get his head up before the animal can buck; but he should be very careful to keep a light hold on the reins, lest the animal by a sudden downward dash of the head, as they are accustomed to do, may pull him on to his neck, in

which case the horse will be almost certain to gain the first fall, if he, to use a Colonial expression, "goes to market." Herein lies the cause of the fact that very few of even the best riders, whose experience has been confined to English or Irish horses, can sit a buck-jumper ; because, having been brought up to the idea that they should always keep a "nice hold of the horse's head," they cannot on a sudden emergency relinquish the long accustomed habit ; and are accordingly put down. It is essential, of course, that the rider should sit well back ; and it is always well for him to watch the animal's ears, so that he may accommodate his seat to the movements of his mount, as it springs round from side to side.

If a man has to ride a buck-jumper, he will have a much better chance of "remaining" in a small enclosure, than in the open ; for in the former, the animal will not be able to get up much pace. In the latter, the rider is impaled on the horns of a dilemma ; for, if he keeps a good hold of the reins, he will, probably, get pulled over on to the animal's neck ; but if he lets the reins loose, the horse will generally go off as fast as it can, and as soon as it has got up to full speed, it will give a buck and halt with an amount of momentum that will be almost impossible to resist, even if the sudden shock be not followed by

several others of its kind. The heavier the ground, the more difficult will it be for the horse to buck, and the easier will be the falling. Mounting a horse in water up to his girths, and then letting him "rip," is an old and safe plan for taking the buck out of an animal.

The saddle for the buck-jumper should be furnished with a crupper and breastplate.

A gag snaffle is the best general bit with which to ride a buck-jumper. The rider may fix the reins as directed on page 244.

Captain McGee of the 17th Lancers has devised a capital anti-bucking bit; its action being to prevent the horse getting his head down. It is specially applicable to breaking horses of this vice.

Before mounting a horse that is inclined to buck, it is advisable, after having saddled him, to lunge him, especially with the long reins (see page 55), for a few minutes, so as to remove, what we may call, the cold feel of the saddle from his back.

If one has to ride a buck-jumper, it is well to have a leading rein (which can be removed after the first few minutes) held by an assistant, so as to prevent the horse breaking away.

FIG. 26.



To face page 75.

The Maories have a capital plan of riding buck-jumpers bare-back, by passing a rope a couple of times round the animal and then tying it, or by using a strong surcingle, inside which they get their knees. The more the horse thus equipped bucks, the firmer are the rider's legs jammed between the rope and the animal's sides (see Fig. 26). If the horse throws itself down, the rider can easily get free, as his feet are outside the rope, or surcingle, as the case may be.

Chucking up the head.—Be careful that the curb chain, if a curb bit be used, does not hurt the sharp edges of the branches of the lower jaw (see page 198), and put the mouth-piece low down in the mouth; or try a large smooth snaffle instead. Try a standing martingale attached to the rings of the snaffle.

Difficult to mount.—Take a short grip of the rear rein, as described on page 16, and make the horse go round and round a few times, to show him he cannot break away, and then mount. Many horses are much easier to mount when free than when held by an assistant. The remedy of this vice, which is, as a rule, very easy of cure, is fully described in *Illustrated Horse-Breaking*.

Kicking.—Keep the horse's head raised, speak to him and "shake him up." If necessary, cut him about the

shoulders with the whip or cane. If a horse kicks, see that the saddle or girths do not pinch him.

Rearing.—The first thing to do, is to see that no part of the gear hurts the horse ; the saddle does not pinch him ; the snaffle does not press against the corners of his mouth ; the mouthpiece of the bit (when a curb is used) is low enough (see page 239) ; and that the curb chain lies flat and easily in the chingroove, and has no tendency to work up on the sharp and sensitive edges of the lower jaw (see page 198). If the biting or saddling has been in fault, the horse should be given time, after the gear has been put to rights, to recover his equanimity. He should then be handled kindly, though firmly. The young animal, whose rearing with a bad rider is more a calfish trick than a vice, will generally reform his habits under a patient and determined horseman, who will speak to him, “shake him up,” catch hold of his head, make him go up to his bridle with the pressure of his legs, and maybe, give him a rib-binder or two with an ash plant.

The old offender, however, must be cowed into submission. He rears to “jib” more effectually ; to avoid going up to his bridle ; to escape being touched with whip, spur, or even with the rider’s legs ; or to dislodge the man on his back. Hence, he is always “behind the hand,” to use

a school phrase. If the rider be quick enough, he may prevent him from getting up, by pulling his head round to the knee at either side. Mr. J. H. Moore advises the rider of a rearer to use a bit and bridoon, lower his hands when the horse rises, bend well over, and, the instant the animal commences his descent, which he will usually notify by pricking his ears forward, to jerk the reins sharply downward, so as to hurt the horse's mouth. A few repetitions of this will seldom fail to cure the vice ; for the horse will find that the new form of punishment to which his rearing subjects him, is far more disagreeable than any irritation which he sought by rearing to escape. The rider's efforts should, if practicable, be assisted by a man on foot, who, armed with a hunting whip, should give the horse a few sharp cuts on his hind legs below the hocks the moment he begins to rise, until he comes down again. After the rearer has brought his fore feet down, he should be kept moving, but should, on no account, be punished.

Captain W. M. Sherston, A.D.C. to H.E. the C. in C., in India, tells me that a capital plan for stopping a horse from rearing, is to hit him a blow over the eye with the palm of the hand, the moment he "gets up." One or two applications he tells me, are efficacious for the remainder of the animal's life. He learned this plan from his father, who is

a very fine horseman. Although I have never tried it, I can fully believe in its good effects, especially as it makes the animal bring down its head and shy off to one side, which are actions that are opposed to the attainment of an upright position by the horse.

When a horse rears, the rider should grip tightly with the knees; for if, while he is bearing his weight on the stirrups, the animal rises straight up, the leathers may come out of the spring bars, an accident which may cause the man to slip down to the ground over the horse's croup. The inexperienced rider may, in order to retain his seat, catch hold of the mane, or even clutch the horse round the neck with both arms.

Hitting the horse between the ears, is a barbarous practice, which is apt to make him break his knees, may injure his poll, is almost certain to render him "shy" of the whip for the rest of his life, and will only make him rear all the higher next time. Besides that, the fact of raising one's hand, when a horse is straight up on end, would be the readiest method one could adopt of committing suicide, by causing the animal to overbalance himself and fall backwards.

"Harry Hieover" observes that "to sit him when he does rear, lean quite forward, give him all his head, and just

before his feet reach the ground clap both spurs to him and hit him under the flank with a jockey-whip or good tough bit of ash plant. He cannot rise again till his feet reach the ground ; he may plunge forward, but if he does, it matters little. Serve him so whenever he rears. But as you value your life, neither touch him with the whip, spur, or bit, while he is up and rising ; for being made angry, he will rise higher on being touched by either, than he otherwise would have done, and possibly high enough to fall over, or at least sideways."

Without attempting a description of the process, which I have found effective for eradicating the vice of rearing, I may say that a few lessons with the long reins (see page 55) and standing martingale (fixed to the rings of the snaffle) will cure almost any rearer of this vice.

Jibbing.—The vice of restiveness, or that of obstinately refusing to go on, is called "jibbing." In common parlance, a restive horse is one which is unsteady ; in fact, one which will not remain standing in the same place. The very opposite to this, however, is the correct meaning. As passive resistance is more difficult to overcome than active opposition, the exhibition of this vice will try the rider's temper and baffle his powers of persuasion and coercion more than the whole list of equine tricks put together ; except, perhaps,

the unpleasant habit some animals contract of prancing, dancing about, and refusing to walk quietly when mounted. If the rider tries to urge on a restive animal, it will, probably, back, kick, shoulder its man up against a tree, wall, or other convenient rubbing-post, bite him if within reach, rear straight on end, or even, as I have known some do, throw itself down and roll. A friend of mine, who is one of the most brilliant cross-country riders I have ever met, was once riding a horse of this description. They got on all right together, until they came to a small watercourse, at which the horse stopped and refused to proceed. My friend, who was holding the reins loosely in his right hand shook them on the animal's neck as a hint to go on. In an instant the brute whipped his head round, seized his rider's wrist with his teeth, and dragged him off his back. The poor fellow battled with the horse for several minutes, and dealt him blow after blow about the muzzle and face with his left hand ; but the horse kept shaking him like a terrier would a rat, until at last, when he let him go, my friend's wrist was a mass of pulp, and had, of course, to be amputated. I am glad to add that this terrible accident did not shake the iron nerves of the sufferer—Mr. " Bertie " Short—and that he subsequently won many steeplechases in India, though he had to use a hook. He rides now with double

reins, which are sewn together at intervals, so as to form loops of about four or five inches long. He is thus able to shorten or lengthen his hold, or can take both reins in his right, and use the whip in his left hand.

Resolute riding and patience will, as a rule, overcome this vice when it is not very strongly developed. I have always found that if "shaking the horse up," and giving him a cut or two of the whip, and a few digs of the spurs, fail, that I could tire him out and disgust him with remaining where he is, by pulling him round and round to one side, and then to the other, sawing his mouth, and reining him back, sooner than by any other means. By acting thus, we punish his mouth and hocks, which is a form of chastisement far more severe, and much less likely to irritate a horse to resistance, than that by whip and spur, which are powerless to make a determined jibber proceed in the direction even the strongest rider wishes him to go; as witness Peter's defeat of Archer.

If we fail, when in the saddle, to make a jibber travel in the direction we desire, it is a good plan as recommended to me by General Peat, to dismount, take hold of the near snaffle rein with the left hand, and by touching the animal behind the girth with a spur or stick held in the right hand, make him revolve round and round for a few

minutes ; and then repeat on the other side, after which, one can usually mount and ride away all right. While thus circling him, we might "job" him in the mouth from time to time, so as to make him readily turn his head round on the rein being felt. If we thus make his fore hand and hind quarters obedient to the "aids," it will be impossible for him to rear. The fact, also, of making the jibber move, even if it be not in the direction objected to by him, seems to be conclusive proof to him that we have the power to make him go in any direction we like. I may say, in passing, that a moderately thick ash plant, or stick, is much more efficacious with a restive horse than is a cutting whip.

Most of us have, doubtless, read Dick Christian's story as told by the Druid, of Mr. Marriott of Welby, who bought a restive horse whose former owner could do nothing with him. "Mr. Marriott takes him home ; and the very first time he rides him, he stops dead at a gate. A man came up, and Mr. Marriott shouts to him : ' Here's a shilling for you, my man ; go to my house, and bring me the Leicester newspaper.' Blame me, but he sat on his back six hours reading the newspaper, the horse wanted to come back and tried it on several times, but he would not let him. Now and then he tries quietly to get him up to the gate, and

about tea-time he does it. He then rode him through, making much of him ; he was such a patient, clever man ; he'd have sat on him for a week, and had his victuals and his umbrella sent him, rather than be beat ; that evening he rode him to Kettleby, Grimstone, Ashfordby, and so home, and opened all the gates on the road. He gave him no trouble no more ; you see as time and good management brings all things to pass."

I knew a case of an officer who bought for a "song," a sound, handsome horse, which was "cast" out of the Artillery for extreme restiveness. The owner put him into a cart to commence with, but instead of going on, he backed until he forced the trap up against a wall. Having arrived there, the officer got out and picketed him. When feeding-time came round, he had the animal's bucket of water and corn brought and placed just out of his reach, and kept him in that tantalising position for about thirty hours. He then undid the picketing ropes, got into the cart, and drove the horse, which was glad to be off, five miles out and the same distance back, and had him watered and fed on his return. The animal never showed any signs of restiveness again, and turned out a valuable purchase.

On this subject a colonel of the Horse Artillery kindly sends me his experience. "I once owned a very sulky

horse which refused to move in harness, although I tried every plan I could think of, persuasive as well as punitive, Having satisfied myself that there was nothing hurting him, and that he jibbed from pure vice, I handed him over to a rough-rider to see what he could do. We brought him down to an open level piece of ground and harnessed him to a dog-cart, which he refused to draw for me on any condition. The rough-rider, who was a very powerful man, then, took hold of the lower bar of the bit, which is parallel to the mouthpiece, and said, 'as you won't come forward, you shall go backwards,' and standing in front of the horse he backed and backed him with the trap until the animal was reeking with sweat and quite exhausted. He then said 'perhaps you'll come forward now.' The horse, evidently very sore in his hocks and tired from backing, willingly moved on ; and although I kept him for a couple of years after that, he never once attempted to decline going. He was mastered."

I mention the plans adopted by Mr. Marriott and my Gunner friends merely as instances of what that admirable virtue, patience, can accomplish ; but not with any wish that my readers should adopt such tedious, and often, as I and others have frequently proved, inefficacious methods. As in rearing (see page 76), so in jibbing, our efforts to

eradicate this vice should be directed to make a horse answer the indications of rein and leg with his fore and hind quarters. When we get both extremities "supple," he will be powerless to fix himself in one spot. Curing a jibber is generally difficult, and is not always possible, especially when the vice is due to want of "heart."

Pulling hard and running away.—If the horse cannot be promptly reined in, the rider should "drop his hands" when the animal gets his head up, and should then wait until he lowers it, before taking a pull, which should be done as if the rider, to use an apt expression of Mr. J. H. Moore, were pulling a cork out of a tight bottle ; while his knees grip still tighter, and his seat is jammed still firmer into the saddle, the harder the horse pulls. The reins should be caught rather short, and the feet drawn somewhat back ; but on no account stuck out in front. If this does not succeed, he should let the horse have his head again, drop his hands, and wait until the animal stops bearing on the bit, and his mouth yields somewhat ; he ought then to take another pull and speak to him. He may "saw" the bit, if he finds that the horse has it between his teeth. Knotting the reins short will give the rider a firm hold on them.

Many bad riders, when on a puller, thrust their feet

forward, hump their shoulders, stick their elbows out, and jam their fists against their waistcoat ; while others keep their arms straight and throw their whole weight on the stirrups. Both these styles should be avoided.

As a rule, the most desperate puller will not break away from control unless his rider has the temerity to give him his head. All may go on well until something startles the animal, who is, generally, on the look out for an excuse. If, when he bounds forward, the rider becomes shifted in his seat, or slackens the reins, the horse will get his head free, and then the odds are all against the man on his back. The rider of such an animal should watch his every movement, so as to be ready to catch him by the head in a moment, and to prevent him from making the second or third bound forward, which he requires to do before he can bolt. Such a horse can often be held at the gallop as long as the rider does not allow him to get his head, in some particular position, stuck out and up generally for choice. He should, of course, use every means to prevent him from doing so, and may have, to keep one hand lower than the other, and a stronger pull on the one rein, rather than an equal one on both. If he fails to hold the animal, he should, if practicable, circle him round and round to whichever side he finds the horse

bends most readily, which will generally be to the left, until he can pull him up.

There are some horses that will run away, when galloping, if their rider attempts to "catch them by the head," but will not do so if he rides with extremely light "hands," using the play of the wrist, rather than the pull of the arms, and speak soothingly to them from time to time. We may observe that many race-horses, when doing their training gallops, will take a strong feeling of the reins as a signal to go all the faster ; but they will slacken speed and pull up, the moment the rider "lets go their heads," at the conclusion of their spin.

There are some men who are not necessarily possessed of great strength, who have the faculty of controlling pullers ; their secret being, I believe, that they do not give the horse anything to pull against ; although they manage to check him, the moment he is off his guard. If he makes a snatch at the reins, they yield them to him, and then take another pull (see page 38).

• However much satisfaction a man, with his own spurs on a borrowed horse, may have in allowing him to run away, and even in urging him on when he begins to show signs of having had "enough ;" still, no horseman, worthy of the name, would wilfully incur the risk of breaking an animal

down, rather than exhaust every effort in trying what fine hands and patient riding can effect. I believe horses have been known to run away (I don't mean breaking away for a few hundred yards) with some of our best riders ; although I have never seen an animal which was properly bitted do so with a really good and strong horseman, who was, at the time, in fair training. We may take for granted, except in rare cases, that when a horse runs away, he is wrongly bitted, or the rider has no "hands," is weak, or is "out of condition." I am sorry that I am as unable to supply my readers with any patent way for stopping a run-away, as I am for remaining in the saddle when on a difficult horse, or when going over a fence. I can only indicate the best methods for attaining these desirable ends.

As regards *the bridling of a puller*, I may remark that, if a double bridle be used, the curb should be put low down in the mouth (see page 239). If it, when used, be found to be inefficient, its reins should be dropped, and the effect of the snaffle alone be tried. A noseband is often very useful : it should be put low enough down to close the animal's mouth, without, however, pressing on his nostrils. A standing martingale attached to the rings of the snaffle, and lengthened out so as just to prevent the animal from getting the mouth-piece of the snaffle off the bars of the

mouth, is very efficient for giving the rider additional power. Its action is described on pages 221 and 222. A Chifney bit (see Fig. 54) is sometimes efficacious. Blackwell's nose-net may be tried if the animal will not stand a tight noseband. The effect of this net is apt to soon wear off.

Some run-aways endeavour to get their tongue over the mouthpiece. If they succeed in this, they will almost invariably pull all the harder, on account of the increased pain to which they subject themselves, and, most likely, because they become frightened at having got the bit or snaffle into an unaccustomed and severe position, from which they are unable to extricate it. We may see something similar to this, when driving a horse that has the trick of getting his tail over the reins. If he manages to do so, the more the driver pulls at the rein to get it free, the more will the animal press his tail down, and kick, or run away. While a horse is endeavouring to free his tongue, he will very probably force it so far back in his mouth as to interfere with his breathing; a fact which we may ascertain by the choking noise he will then make. As long as the horse keeps his tongue under the snaffle, or properly placed bit with a low port, he will feel that he can save the sensitive bars of his mouth by the upward

pressure of his tongue, and by the play of his head and neck. An excellent arrangement for racing purposes, as practised by Mr. J. H. Moore, for preventing the trick in question, is to tie down the tongue by a piece of tape fastened not too tightly under the chin-groove. As this would be unsightly for ordinary purposes, the rider might try a form of bit which some recommend, but which I have not had an opportunity of practically testing. It consists of a light, rectangular, steel "gridiron," suspended in the same manner as are the "keys" of a breaking snaffle, to the centre of the mouthpiece, which may be straight or have a low port. With it, a noseband is required to keep the mouth shut. The "gridiron" should be placed back in the mouth. When the horse tries to get his tongue over the mouthpiece, he lifts up the "gridiron," which comes against his palate, and thus prevents his tongue going forward (see Fig. 52).

Shouldering.—Pull the horse's head round towards the wall, or other object against which he tries to jam you.

Shying and unsteadiness.—A horseman ought to be above minding small eccentricities of manner in his mount and should take in good part a playful shy or kick, a slight rear or light-hearted bound or two, though he should never tolerate direct opposition to his wishes. When horses are

“fresh,” especially when they have just come out of a warm stable into the cold, crisp morning air, they will dance about, and “lark” on little or no provocation, although on their return home after a hard day’s work they may be steady enough for the most timid old gentleman. As shying, when uncombined with restiveness, arises from defective vision, high spirits, or fear, the rider should not attempt to counteract it by punishment, beyond a chiding word, or a slight touch of the spurs, just to indicate his wishes. He may, however, take a good hold of the reins, and press him well up to the bit with his legs. It is only reasonable, as “Harry Hieover” remarks, to turn the horse’s head away from the object at which he shies, so that it may no longer affect him. Partial cataract, and shortsightedness, which is frequently present with that prominent appearance of the eye called among horsemen “buck eyes,” are not uncommon causes of shying. In the vast majority of cases, however, the two faults we are considering are the results of unskilful riding on previous occasions. A generous, high-spirited horse starts at a bird flying across the road, or at hearing the report of a gun, as any nervous person might do, or pricks his ears on seeing some unusual object. The man on his back thereupon snatches at the reins, “jobs” him with the spurs, hits him with the whip,

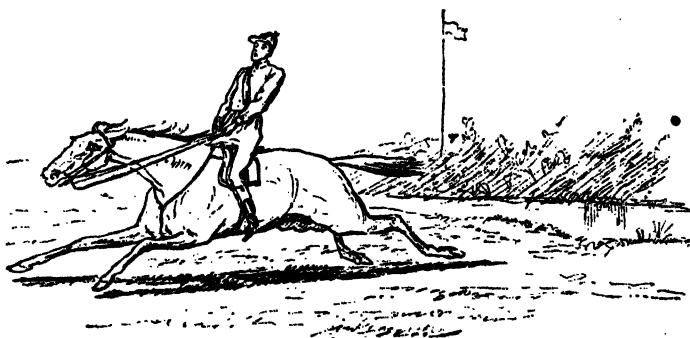
and yells out, "Do you think I stole you?" or some other choice expression which he has the authority of his groom for considering to be *en règle*. An animal thus treated will naturally—for a horse never forgets—associate in his own mind the idea of punishment with anything which, before, might have excited but his passing interest, and will become more or less unmanageable from fear of his barbarous rider. Or, a timid person on horseback, on seeing some object or expecting to hear some noise which he may think will alarm the horse, may clutch at the reins, and try, in anticipation, to reassure his courage by saying "Steady, lad," "Whow-ho, boy." By acting thus, he will make the horse believe that something very dreadful is going to happen, and will cause him to be thoroughly on the *qui vive* against danger. When he has been worked up into this state by his rider, he will of course be only too ready to express his fear in a form which will probably be very disagreeable to the man in the saddle. I recollect one morning, when I was in the Bengal Staff Corps, finding that I could not ride my charger, as there was something wrong with him, and as I had a very good-looking selling plater which was well up to weight, I thought it would be rather fun trying him at the brigade parade, to which I had to go with my regiment. He did not quite like the look

of the sepoy's at first, but calmed down very soon. The order was given to fire a *feu de joie*, which, I may tell my non-military readers, tries a horse's steadiness more than any other noise in existence. I saw the other officers drawing up their reins and going through the usual formula, while their chargers were prepared to display their accustomed amount of emotion. As I knew that my horse had never heard a *feu de joie*, I tried the experiment of sitting still and leaving the reins slack. At the word of command, the rattle of musketry came down the front rank, and then up the rear rank, causing other horses, which had been chargers for years, to whisk round, and almost to, metaphorically, "jump out of their skins;" but neither the old selling plater or myself took the slightest notice of the row. So surprised was I at his tranquillity that I thought he was deaf, until I had to go out to "take up a point;" for after going a few yards, I spoke to him, and he "went into his bridle" in a moment, thus showing that he minded an indication from me infinitely more than one from outside.

Stumbling.—There are two kinds of stumblers. The one lifts his foot, at the walk, without throwing his weight too much forward at the same time, but he does not bend his knee enough, or unduly depresses his toe, when putting the foot to the ground. If, at the conclusion of the step,

there be an inequality on the ground, he will, in all probability, strike it, and stumble ; but, except in very rare cases he will not fall, for the misadventure will not be enough to disturb the equilibrium of his body. The rider, if he be not very nervous, may well disregard this fault, unless it belongs to an animal intended for show rather than for use. Many horses which have low and good galloping action, trip or "toe" when walking. The other and dangerous kind of stumbler has generally straight shoulders, infirm fore legs, or cramped action. As he leans his weight too much forward, he is very liable to catch the ground with the toe of his advancing fore leg, a fall being the probable result, from the centre of gravity of the body being well beyond the point of support of the fore legs. If, added to the imperfect manner in which the body is balanced, the animal be infirm in front, he will have but a remote chance of recovering himself, in the event of a bad trip. All that the rider can do to prevent such a catastrophe is to ride the horse well up to his bridle, so that he may get his hind legs under him. A properly adjusted curb bit may be substituted for the snaffle. The rider should on no account punish the horse for stumbling ; for that would have the effect only of making him start and prance about after the mistake has occurred ; but will not make him go more

“collectedly” before it takes place. Besides this, the habit of throwing up the head and dancing about after a stumble is quite as disagreeable, though not as dangerous a trick as the fault itself. Much may be done to prevent stumbling by a little attention to shoeing. The trick of “knucking over behind,” which is a stumble with one of the hind feet, can generally be cured by lowering the foot, if it be too long, and reducing it under the toe, so as to get the slope of the hoof at an angle of from 55° to 60° . The slope of the fore foot should be about 50° . Weakness, the awkwardness common among young horses, and the practice of wearing too heavy shoes, often induce stumbling.



CHAPTER VI.

RIDING OVER FENCES.

Jumping—Riding Refusers.

Jumping.—As it is essential for safety, when crossing a country, that the horse should take his fences in a steady, business-like manner; the rider ought to try to avoid betraying any unusual eagerness or anxiety, beyond showing, by a firm pressure of the legs, and a good hold of the horse's head, that he means the animal to go straight, when approaching an obstacle. He should eschew the vicious habit of shifting about in his seat, and of working with the reins, or "niggling" at the horse's mouth, as we sometimes call it in Ireland. I may say that the art of riding well, over a country, chiefly consists in making as little as possible of the jumps, and that the fact of the rider treating fences and level ground with equal indifference, will inspire his horse with confidence to take things in the same spirit. On a strange horse or

FIG. 27.



on one of which we have any doubt, we might restrain his pace a bit, or send him along with an encouraging word. But we should never, unless on a peculiar horse, or in a peculiar country, pull him up, when we come to a fence, in order that he may take it according to any arbitrary ideas of our own ; neither should we frighten him half out of his life by whip, spur, or voice, to show the spectators how brave we are, or to harden our own hearts. In order to be one with a horse, we should endeavour to get him to take his fences in the same manner as we would do ourselves, were we on foot, and were we possessed of the requisite activity. As horses are very prone to take liberties—perhaps because, as Whyte-Melville says, they don't like jumping—the rider should show his mount that his one object is to go straight. If, however, when going up to a fence, the horseman sees proper cause for pulling up, or turning his animal off it, he should do so with the very clearest “indications” of leg and rein, so that the horse may not make the mistake of thinking that he is allowed to refuse. I may say, in passing, that I have ridden a few horses who were passionately fond of jumping, and who would have taken a lot of stopping to have made them turn away from a fence at which they were once put.

When hunting in a cramped country, it is especially necessary to ride in such a manner as to show the horse that he has to go where one wants, and that he is not required to jump every fence which comes in sight. In steeplechasing, on the contrary, the horse should have the necessity impressed upon him of clearing every obstacle at which he is turned, with quickness and precision. The value of the hunter greatly depends on his possessing the necessary intelligence for understanding his master's wishes. Need I say how requisite it is for the rider to have decision of character? Riding in a flying country is, of course, more or less like chasing, in which the possession of the faculties for galloping, staying, and jumping makes the perfect horse. As every rider who steers his own horse, has a right to study his own convenience as to whether his animal should go fast or slow at his fences, I have nothing to remark on this subject beyond saying, that if a horse requires to be steadied at a jump, the pull ought not to be taken nearer, as a rule, than thirty or forty yards away from it, and that the horse, for that distance, ought to be allowed to make his own pace up to it, always supposing that the rider has a steady feeling on his animal's mouth, and that he never leaves the reins loose. As horses vary so

much, it would be useless for me to lay down any rules about steadying them, or riding them at their fences, except in the most general terms. Clever jumpers, as a rule, fence best when the rider lets them have their head, and make their effort without either rousing or restraining. Many horses, however, are so shifty and uncertain that they need all the assistance they can get. Those of us who have gone in for pedestrianism, must have sometimes felt, when running up to a jump, that the steps we were taking would not give us the proper take off, and that it was necessary for us, in order to obtain it, to lengthen or shorten our stride. We may experience the same feeling when riding a horse up to a fence; and, if we have had sufficient practice, and are possessed of the requisite "nerve," we may find that we instinctively make him extend or "collect" himself, so that he may "take off" correctly. As a rule, the best way to make a horse jump "big," is to pull him together, on nearing a fence, and make him bring his hindquarters under him by the pressure of the legs and a touch of the whip.

When the horse is going at a fence, the rider should have both hands on the reins, so as to prevent a refusal, or to "pull the horse together," if required. He should not shift his seat from what it was in the canter or

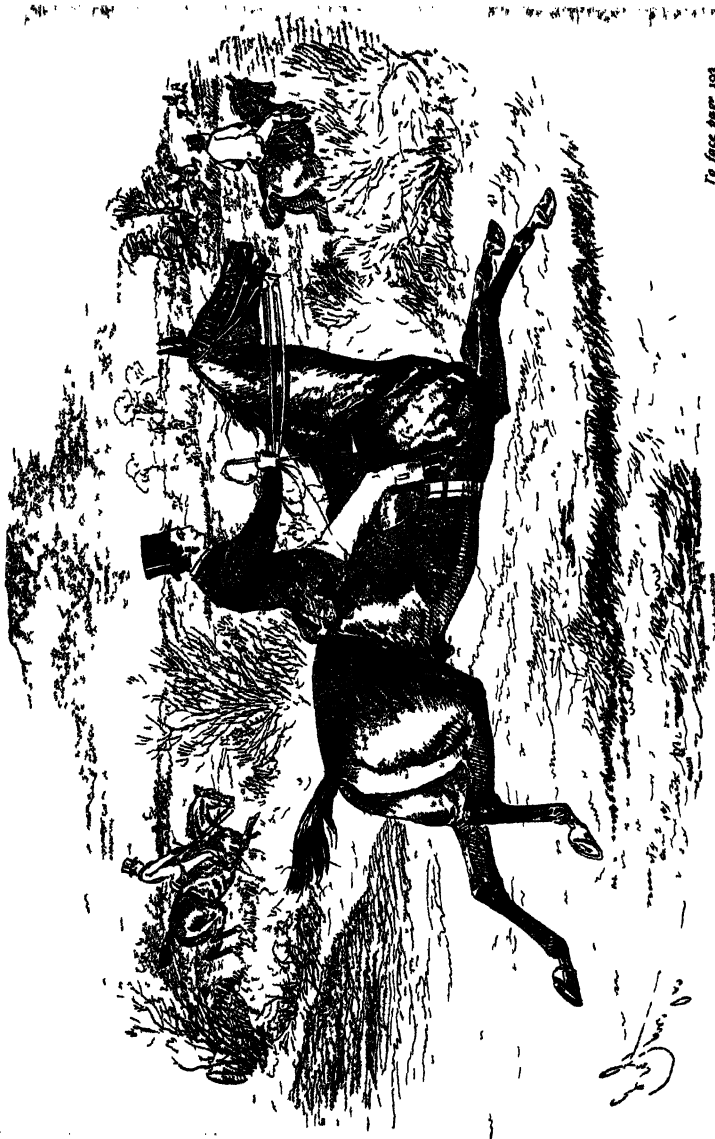
gallop. On this subject, my friend Mr. E. M. Owen, the well known G. R., remarks : "The body should go with the horse, and there should be no settling down into the saddle to disconcert the last few strides which the animal always has to himself. How can he be expected to properly collect himself and to control his limbs, when a rider is what is called, 'getting well back' ? We see many falls from that cause. If riders would only allow the horse to do that for them, instead of bustling the animals, there would be far fewer 'clumsy brutes' about, than there are ; and all because men won't sit still, and allow the horse, when he rises, to put them back naturally. If this be done, the body will gradually go into its proper place, as the horse descends, and, consequently, the weight will be distributed evenly. Give the horse plenty of head room and the body will go with him. As an example, get on to a rocking horse, hold on tight to its head, and see how it will act."

'The rider should avoid the trick of raising one hand ; for it is not alone "bad form," but it also deprives the rider of its assistance at the very moment it may be most needed. He should, on no account, catch the cantle of the saddle—unless, perhaps, over a deep drop jump—as doing so is reprehensible on the same account, besides being dan-

gerous in the event of the horse happening to fall, as the rider could not then well get clear, if the animal were to roll over. As the tendency of the inexperienced, or inexperienced rider, when coming up to a fence, is almost always to bend his body forward, and to thrust out his feet in front, he should try to lean back and draw his feet back, as the horse is clearing the obstacle. The leaning back should be accomplished by the play of the hip joints, and not by any shifting of the seat. If his feet be forward when the horse lands on the other side, the resulting jerk of the feet on the stirrup irons—as the legs will then be necessarily straight—will re-act in the direction of the legs, and as this will be below the centre of gravity of the body, it will have a strong tendency to tilt the rider over. Although a weak-seated man is, sometimes, “jumped out of his saddle” by a very “flippant” fencer; bad riders, in nine falls out of ten, tumble off at the moment of landing. If, when a horse lands over a fence, the rider has his feet drawn back, the jerk caused by the horse coming on the ground, will be borne by the rider’s thighs, which will “give to,” and nullify, as much as possible, the disturbing effect of the shock. From the moment the horse goes at a fence, until he lands and “gets away” from it, the fine rider should maintain exactly the same seat, with reference

to the vertical position of his body. I make this remark merely in passing ; for I am well aware that nothing but long practice will enable the rider to acquire the necessary power of balance to do so. However, the better he understands what he ought to learn, the quicker will he profit by practical instruction on horseback. As long as a man keeps his feet and legs in proper position, I cannot see how he can lean too far back on landing over a fence. Besides obtaining safety for himself, he will, by leaning back, reduce, very considerably, the jar on the horse's fore legs. Leaning back, however, is of no use, unless the rider draws his feet back at the same time.

When a horse goes up to a fence prepared to jump in proper form, his hind quarters will be well under him, and his loins will be slightly arched, ready to make their effort. When he thus "collects" himself, he will draw in his head and neck a little, so that the position of the spinal column may assist the action of the limbs. When the horse, on the contrary, lands—unless he comes down on all fours like a stag over a paling, as some will do over a wall or post and rails, especially when ridden in a curb, the reins of which are let go the moment the animal takes off—the head and neck will be more or less fully extended. Hence, a man, when going at a fence, should ride with a



AN "IMPARTIAL" SEAT

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long rein, so that he may not run the risk of interfering with the horse's mouth when he lands, or of being pulled over on to the animal's neck. The hands, one on each rein, and well separated, should be held little, if anything, beyond the pommel.

In the *Frontispiece*, the proper manner of sitting down, when going at a fence, is admirably shown. In Fig. 28 Mr. Sturgess has happily hit off a not uncommon type of horseman who is quite "impartial" as to what part of the saddle he places his weight. He is at present perched on the cantle, with his feet well forward, his hands up in the air, and the reins so short that he is bound to come off, if the impetuous, free-going horse he is riding "runs out" at his fence, as he seems inclined to do, or lands into the next field.

From nervousness, or from some insane idea of "lifting" a horse, some riders contract the habit of jerking up their hands just as the horse is making his spring. By doing this, the rider tends to make his horse throw up his head and thus not alone checks the free action of his hind quarters, at the very moment their assistance is most needed; but, also, prevents him from seeing where he is to put his feet on landing; and consequently performs the very action which is best calculated to make the animal

fall. He should on the contrary keep his hands low down, so that the horse may be induced to bend his neck, and carry his head in the best position for conforming to the action of the hind quarters, and to see where he is going to put his feet.

When the rider can take his own time over jumps, the old axiom of riding a horse slow over timber, *i.e.* any high obstacle, and fast at water, *i.e.* any broad place, holds good (see page 168). At steeplechasing, however, a great deal has to be left to the honour of the horse, while the jockey does his part by sitting still, and keeping a good hold of his animal's head. When I write about going slow at height, I mean that it should be done at a good steady canter. I am no advocate for crawling or craning.

Over bare *post and rails*, if the former are not higher than the latter, I would advise the horseman to ride at the post in preference to the rail; as the animal can see it much better, and take off much more accurately before it, than he could do, were he to attempt to jump the other; for owing to the horizontal position of his eyes, he can judge far more readily the distance of vertical objects, than of horizontal ones which have daylight between them and the ground. If the post and rails are "bushed up," the one can, of course, be seen as well as the other.

I am here supposing that the obstacle cannot be chanced with impunity. If the post be higher than the rail, we may jump the horse a little to one side of the post.

If the horse happens to come down, and the rider has the good luck to maintain his seat, he should leave the reins perfectly loose so as not to interfere with the animal's efforts. If he be unseated, he should try to roll clear, while keeping a firm hold of the reins as long as he can. Practice undoubtedly enables us to acquire, to some extent, the art of falling softly, though it is hardly a sufficiently exact science to be treated of theoretically in a book.

Riding refusers.—Horses generally refuse an obstacle because they are afraid of it ; are sulky ; have got into the habit of being allowed or have been forced to "run out" by incompetent or timid riders ; are afraid of facing their bit ; or because they fear hurting themselves when taking off or landing. In such cases, the rider should sit well down in the saddle, and catch a good hold of the animal's head, with the reins well separated, and both hands on them. An encouraging word and firm pressure of the legs will stimulate the horse's courage, and a touch of the spurs may be advisable. If the horse refuses to one particular side, the rider may

hold the whip in that hand and "show" it to him. The remarks I have made about the riding of borers on page 68, apply equally well to that of horses which "run out" on nearing a fence. Many of the safest horses are somewhat "reluctant," and require a cut of the whip, or a touch of the spurs; while others, on the contrary, will decline the invitation, if the horseman even "feels" the reins, or brushes their sides with his unarmed heels. One of the worst falls I have ever had, was when riding a steeplechase on a very uncertain tempered horse, whose owner, a professional jockey, had failed a few days before to make him fence. We had only a small field opposed to us, and, as I did not move on him, we agreed fairly together for a while. At the end of the first half of the journey I was leading by several lengths and thought the race was as good as won, until we arrived at the eighth or ninth fence, which was a 4ft. 6in. wall that could not be "chanced." I suppose the fact of my not liking the look of the barrier made me bustle my mount; for I rammed the spurs in just as he was going to make his effort; as I instinctively felt that he was taking off very far away from the wall, and that he would require an unusually strong impulse to clear it. The moment I touched him I felt him try to stop; but his evil intention was formed too late, so all he could do was to

breast the masonry. In another instant he was stretched on his back on the landing side, the saddle smashed, and I crumpled up.

Some men will make any horse refuse, however clever and willing the animal may be. I have known individuals of ~~this~~ class get up to ride over a country, even in steeplechases, without ~~the~~ slightest intention of crossing a single fence. The fact of their ~~horses~~ refusing requires no explanation. There are others, however, who, ~~with~~ the best possible intentions, are unable to induce their animals to jump. The fault, in nine cases out of ten, lies in the rider not being able to throw his heart over—to use an old expression—for something more than mere passive permission is required to get most horses to fence kindly. Riders, such as I am describing, when they mean going straight, fail, as a rule, on account of not pressing the animal up to his bridle with their legs, and from using the reins in a wrong manner. When he goes too slow at his fence, instead of pulling him together, and sending him up to his bit, they slacken the reins and let him “run out,” without attempting to steady him, as they ought to do, by the pressure of their legs. If the horse is a free mover, they take a dead pull on his mouth and never think of closing their legs to his sides, which is the one indication,

above all others by which the animal understands that his rider means jumping.

When a horse refuses on account of being afraid to propel himself, the mischief generally lies in the hocks ; but when his dislike to jumping arises from his dread of painful concussion on landing, splints, fever in the feet, corns, navicular disease, or injured ligament or tendon will most frequently be to blame. I may remark, in passing, that it is not very uncommon to find slight cases of laminitis or navicular disease among hunters, and even among successful steeplechase horses. I have known two or three cases of horses which were previously fine, bold fencers, becoming refusers from having over-reached on their back tendons. The harder the ground, the more will any form of unsoundness affect the animal's jumping capabilities. I remember a sad case of a most promising steeplechase rider being killed by his horse falling on him over a small fence, simply because the landing was hard and the animal had bad corns.

We may frequently see the rider of a horse which happens to refuse a fence, take him again and again at it while vigorously plying whip and spur. Each time the animal baulks, he does so with stronger determination than ever not to jump the obstacle. Horses have such

retentive memories, and such obstinate wills, when their tempers are fully roused, that a lesson or two of the sort I have described, often ruins a horse for life. I recall an instance of a bold and accomplished steeplechase rider trying a horse he was to ride, in two or three days, over the course which was to be "flagged out" for them. After negotiating a few fences cleverly, the animal, whether from jumping in "cold blood," or from some reason of his own, baulked at a small bank with a ditch in front of it. The rider lost his temper, probably on account of the presence of a few friends who had come to admire, and used whip and spur when bringing him round, but he refused again, and would have nothing to say to the fence, although his rider "cut him almost to ribbons." I need hardly say that when the race came off, the horse refused at the very same place and would go no farther. I cannot too strongly impress on my readers that a man should never be drawn into a pitched battle with his mount unless he is all but certain of victory. It is no matter how strong and good a rider a man may be, he cannot, when on the animal's back, force him to jump a fence which he has made up his mind to refuse. Many men have an insane idea, if a horse baulks with them, that they are bound to "have it out" with him, and fight to the bitter end ; as if the refusal were a

personal challenge on the part of the horse, and that, if they do not punish him severely for the supposed insult, their reputation for courage would suffer. The contest is such a one-sided affair that none but a bully would accept it. Were the horse free to kick and bite the man, who is at liberty to flog and spur the animal, there might be some merit in the rider's exhibition of cruelty. The moment we find that punishment does not succeed, we should resort to some other means for accomplishing our object; for the more we punish, the worse will be the effect of the horse's ultimate victory be on him.

However senseless it may be for a man to fight his own horse for the unworthy object of gratifying resentment and "showing off;" the action is trebly unjustifiable when the horse belongs to some one else, especially when the rider is a hired servant. We pay our jockeys to ride races, our grooms to exercise and school our hunters in the best possible manner, and not to afford them an opportunity of displaying their bravery at the expense of our four-legged property.

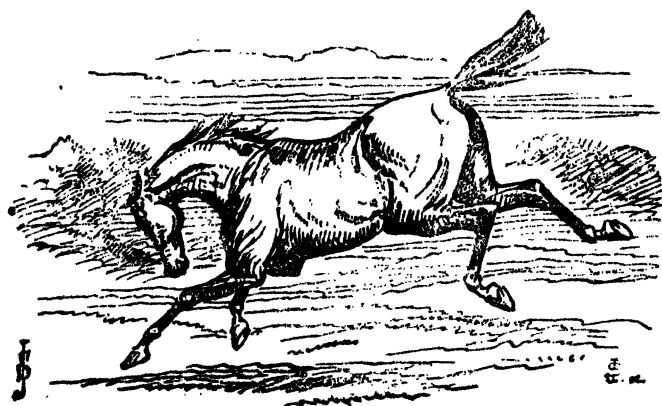
Nothing is more apt to disgust a horse with jumping than the practice of "larking" him several times over the same obstacle. If a horse which one is training, determinedly baulks at a fence two or three times, one

should never "fight him" with whip and spur, but one may keep him at the fence, work his mouth about, back him and weary him, so that, at last, he will be glad to take the fence rather than to endure the punishment his hocks and mouth are receiving. A lead by another horse, or even by an assistant holding a lunging rope, may be tried with good effect.

For a speedy and effective method of curing refusers see *Illustrated Horse-Breaking*.

Some horses which are inclined to refuse at particular kinds of fences, do not actually do so when ridden in a determined manner, though they may jump short or bungle in one way or the other. A steeplechase mare, which I afterwards bought, and which was the animal whose tricks I described on page 71, had, during the early part of her career, a strong objection to water. The moment she saw it in front of her, she used to "dig her toes into the ground," and try to stop or "run out"; while, if she was ridden resolutely, she would simply jump into the centre of it, and she would then scramble out, as she was too clever to fall. To cure this trick, her owner constructed a deep-water jump, at the bottom of which he laid down bundles of thorny bushes, and weighted them till they were nearly flush with the surface of the water.

That done, he mounted the mare and took her at the artificial brook as fast as he could send her along. She tried her best to stop, and then jumped as usual straight into the middle of it, out of which she bounded twice as quick as she had leaped into it. For a full week after that, her owner and groom were occupied in picking the sharp thorns out of her belly and legs; but the lesson had its effect, as she never jumped short again at any brook "between the flags." When the steeplechase for which she was being trained came off, all, except those who were in the secret, were surprised to see the whilom refuser at water, clear the brook on the course by a good ten feet.



CHAPTER VII.

RACE RIDING.

Standing in the Stirrups—Manner of Holding the Reins—How to Handle the Reins—Starting—Judging Pace—The different Ways of Riding a Race—Waiting—Making the Running—Waiting in Front—Keeping with one's Horses—General Remarks on Race Riding—Peculiarities in the Shape and Action of Horses—The Seat when Finishing—On Finishing—On Riding "Rogues"—On Riding Pullers—Orders—On the Use of Spurs during a Race—On the Use of the Whip—Effect of Punishment on Horses.

IF a horse were a mere machine, the jockey's business would be the delightfully simple one of regulating his speed, so that he might gallop over the appointed course in the shortest possible space of time. Horses, however, will not bear being treated in this mechanical manner: they have peculiarities common to their species, as well as racing points, infirmities and tempers of their own, all of which should be taken advantage of, studied and humoured by the rider who strives to be the first to catch the judge's eye. As race riding, then, is not an exact

science to which cut-and-dried rules are applicable, I must content myself, in this chapter, with noting down a few hints and practical remarks, which I trust the novice will find useful.

Standing in the Stirrups.—At starting, the jockey of course sits down in the saddle, but as soon as the horse has got into his stride, he should “stand in the stirrups” (see Fig. 29). This attitude is assumed in order to enable the rider to conform to the movements of the horse in the best possible manner. The body should be slightly bent forward, and should be free from all stiffness. The seat should be somewhat raised from the saddle—not stuck out over the cantle—without any up-and-down motion. The knee should be very little bent, in fact only sufficient to give the joint some “play.” The heels should be a trifle depressed, while the feet should be kept parallel to the sides of the horse, and should be placed well “home” in the stirrups. The legs and feet should be kept perfectly steady. The head should be held well up, the eyes looking straight between the horse’s ears, the shoulders down, and not rounded, and the hands on each side of the withers, with a good firm hold on the reins, so that the horse may go well up to his bridle. The fingers, wrists, elbows and shoulders should be kept as loose and pliable as possible.



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TOM CANNON AND ROBERT THE DEVIL.

As Tom Cannon kindly pointed out to me, the position should be such that the points of the shoulder, knee and toe should be very nearly in the same vertical line ; the whole attitude should be characterised by grace and ease, like that of this celebrated jockey on the St. Leger winner, Robert the Devil (see Fig 29). The balance should be preserved by the grip of the legs, a light pressure of the feet on the stirrups, and the hold the rider has on the reins, while the knee-joints act as a spring to "give and take" to the motion of the horse, so that the weight may be carried smoothly forward at each stride, and that there may not be the slightest jolting, or up-and-down movement. The jockey should be careful not to rest his weight on the stirrups. By riding in the manner described, the horse's muscles that are used in galloping will act to the greatest advantage. The balance should be true and well maintained, so that, in the event of a stumble, swerve, or any unexpected movement, the horseman may be ready to throw his shoulders back, grip the saddle with his knees, and "catch the horse by the head" in a moment.

I am well aware that many good jockeys do not ride exactly as I have described ; for instance, several turn their toes out and depress them. We should, however, remember

that if a man who has a bad style rides well, he does so, either in spite of his faulty method, and would ride all the better were it improved ; or because some physical peculiarity necessitates his adopting a style of his own.

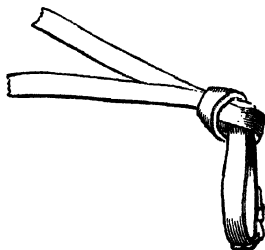
The harder the horse pulls, the tighter should the grip of the knees become. If the rider, when trying to hold his horse, presses on the stirrups rather than grips with the knees, the stirrups and feet will move forward, and the rider's seat will be carried over the cantle ; an attitude which will throw the weight back towards the loins, and will cause the body to bump up and down on account of the arms being necessarily rigid (see page 40). But as the saddle cannot shift in the same manner as the stirrups are liable to do, a firm grip of the legs will enable the hands, arms and body to "give and take" with the movements of the head and neck, as the horse moves forward at each stride. The more the animal pulls, the closer should the elbows be brought to the sides ; while, to gain more power, the knuckles may be turned down, and the palms of the hands up.

In five-furlong races, when it is a case of "jumping off with the lead and coming along all the way through," jockeys frequently adopt a seat which is a sort of compromise between standing in the stirrups and finishing.

The knees are then more bent, the seat is closer to the saddle, and the hands are kept higher than in the former position, while the feet and body are not drawn back as much as they are in the latter.

Manner of Holding the Reins.—The reins should be held crossed (as described in Chapter I.) in both hands, and the whip should be kept, lash down, and in the right or left hand, as may be deemed most fit. Almost all jockeys put a knot (Fig. 30) a few inches from the end of

Fig. 30.



their reins, the knot being made so that the buckle points down. This is done to prevent the slack of the rein from flying about. I may remark that it is the present fashion to use a single rein on a snaffle, even with a martingale, in preference to double reins. Edwin Martin (that fine horseman who won the Cambridgeshire on Bathilde) tells me that our old jockeys, such as Frank Butler, Flatman,

Chifney, etc., would not have thought of riding a race without double reins and a martingale, on a snaffle, and that the two reins give one much more command over the horse than the single one. Although I have always been of this opinion, still I would have hardly dared to have criticised the fashionable custom of the single rein, had not Mr. Martin mentioned the subject to me as being well worthy of notice.

How to Handle the Reins.—Little can be said on the all-important subject of "hands," beyond stating that the touch of the rider's fingers on the reins ought to be as delicate, though at the same time firm, as those of a pianist on the keys of his instrument. Sam Chifney says, you should ride "as if you had a silken rein as fine as a hair, and that you were afraid of breaking it." If the horse throws up his head, when trying to "break away," "drop your hands," and he will then lower his head; when he does so, take a pull at him, for his head is then in the proper position for the bit to act on the gums. When his head is in the air, the snaffle will act only on the corners of his mouth. Never keep a dead pull on the reins, but "give and take," so that the horse may understand your wishes by the feeling of his mouth. Who has ever seen a horse run away with poor George Fordham, when he was fit and

well? And yet he had but a small amount of "brute force." For remarks on "hands," see page 37.

The jockey should keep his hands "down," so that the horse may be able to carry his head and neck in the best possible manner for favouring the movements of his limbs and loins. It is most important that the natural position of the vertebræ of the neck and back should not be interfered with. We know from experience that a horse cannot kick freely if his head is held up. Neither can he gallop "in form" with his nose in the air. The hands alone must be employed to keep the head down; for if a short martingale be used, the probability is that the horse will not face it kindly. That valuable piece of saddle-gear should be employed only for giving the rider a good "hold" of the horse's head, and for enabling him to keep him straight.

Starting.—Whether the orders are to wait, or to make the running, the jockey should employ every legitimate means to "get off" as quickly as he can; for whatever distance is lost at the start must be made up when the horses are galloping, at which time the effort to regain the lost lengths may, very possibly, be equivalent to throwing away an advantage of as many pounds. We should remember that the faster horses are going, the greater is

the effort required to make up lost ground. Although a horse may, when his field are merely cantering, decrease a gap of five or six lengths, with but a trifling expenditure of force ; still, when they come to race against each other, to make up such a distance in, say, half a mile, may tax his powers to the very utmost. When walking up to the starter, the jockey should sit down in the saddle with his seat well under him, so that he may not be jerked back on to the cantle, or pulled over the pommel of the saddle, in the event of the horse suddenly springing forward, or swinging his head down and stretching out his neck, as impetuous ones will sometimes do. He should press his legs to the horse's sides so as to keep him up to the bridle ; should ride with sufficiently long reins to avoid the possibility of checking the horse when he is getting into his stride ; and should be "off" with the drop of the flag. When coming up into line, he should keep his horse as much on the move as possible ; for one that is bending and prancing a bit will gain lengths of another which walks sluggishly up, although they may be perfectly level at the moment when the starter gives the signal. Lads learn the tricks of starting—such as stopping a little behind and then coming into line at a canter, while the others are walking, on the chance of the starter letting them go—quite soon

enough, without it being necessary for me to allude to such practices, further than to say that they don't "pay" with a starter who will not stand any nonsense.

It is well for a jockey, except when on a very fidgety animal, to be first down to the post; for he will then have his choice of place, which, as a rule, will be on the inside—Archer's favourite position.

I might here suggest to the genuine lover of the turf, that considerable information, pleasure and even profit may be obtained from closely watching the start, not only for the larger and more important races, but occasionally for the five and six furlong scurries. The careful observer will learn much of the tactics of the horsemen of the day, and cannot help being struck by the many instances in which the jockey's efforts at the post are understood and assisted by his horse.

"I remember," Captain Jones once observed to me, "a notable instance of this in the case of the celebrated mare, Nutbush, the property of Captain Hawksley. My readers who can look back upon something like fifteen or sixteen years of turf history will not fail to remember this veritable flier, which at five furlongs was well-nigh invincible, and which won several good handicaps when a three-year-old, with steady weights ranging from 9 st. to 10 st. 4 lb.

Indeed, her sensational match with Little Lady, the property of Lord Stamford, who was then betting very heavily, will always keep her memory green.

“She was in nearly every instance ridden by George Fordham, and so thoroughly acquainted was she with her business at the post, that nothing would induce her to take her eyes off the starter’s flag. Notwithstanding frequent—shall I write—‘kidding’ attempts of the Demon, as *he* was then called, to persuade her that it was a start, she would never move one inch until the starter himself gave the signal which she knew so well. Then she put matters beyond dispute ; for she was into her bridle in an instant, and was well clear of her field in the first hundred yards, thus adding an incalculable advantage to her naturally magnificent turn of speed.

“I do not think that some of the younger generation, who are always scheming and contriving to get an inside place and a flying start, would have done a tithe of the good for the mare which her own natural sagacity and love of the game did for her and for her legion of backers, many of whom profited largely by reason of their knowledge of this peculiarity of the flying Nutbush.”

The saying that a man will always beat a boy when it comes to racing is equally true when applied to starting.

"At the start, boys (for I allude to them—the light weights of the present day) are generally left at the post or get badly off, and ride their horses to a standstill before half the distance has been gone over in the vain hope of regaining their lost ground" (*Mr. William Day*). How often it happens that in a big handicap, after two or three false starts, the light weights are "all over the place," while their horses are fretful and out of hand. When they return with difficulty to the starter, they are unable to get them quickly "on their legs," and they let them "go all abroad" with the certainty of running them to a standstill before they can take a pull; while one of the top weights, who on public form appears to have seven pounds the worst of the handicap, gets off well in front with his horse cool and collected and is not caught by the lightly-penalised ones, until their bad start, or misapplied efforts, have deprived them of the greater part of the advantage which they appeared to have had on paper. After that, when it comes to a finish, what chance can a tired weak boy have against a strong resolute man?

Mr. William Day, in his valuable work, 'The Racehorse in Training,' cites the following instances of inferior riding nullifying advantages of weight. "Fräulein, running at Goodwood in the Stewards' Cup, with 6 st. 4 lbs. on her,

was not placed ; but running afterwards for the Doncaster Cup, beat Marie Stuart, and won other races at other places in the hands of men, showing about three st. improvement. Again, we see at the same meeting (Goodwood) that Valuer running with 6 st. 4 lbs. on his back, was not one of the first twenty ; and yet he was always better than Historian at even weights. He ran no better at Newmarket with similar weights the same year, which was some twenty-eight lbs. worse than his real form—a fact that was afterwards publicly proved by the many races he won when carrying two stone more in much the same company.”

Judging Pace.—A jockey should not alone have a firm seat, good hands, be thoroughly well up in all the tactics of race riding, and have courage and dash to carry them out as opportunity may offer ; but should also know at what pace his own horse is going compared to that of the other runners, should be able to regulate his speed so that he may have the best possible chance of “getting home” successfully, and should be able to select the exact spot from which he ought to make his effort at the finish. Constant practice, as well as natural aptitude is necessary to enable one to acquire the almost instinctive faculty for judging pace.

The different Ways of Riding a Race may be generally summed up as follows: 1. Waiting; 2. Making the running; 3. Waiting in front; 4. Keeping with one's horses, and then coming away at the finish and winning if one can. As it is impossible to foretell how a race will be run, or what changes may occur while the horses are actually running, the jockey should be ready to vary his tactics, according to circumstances, with the utmost promptness. When we consider that the time for action often lasts but for two or three seconds, during which to calculate the various chances and to resolve what to do, we shall cease to wonder that this jockey instinct, or intuitive power of grasping the situation, combined with quickness and courage to act, is as rare a mental faculty as genius in any other walk of life. Possibly, a dozen men in England who can ride 8 st. 7 lbs. possess it; probably, not as many.

Waiting.—As a rule the jockey should "wait." By doing so, the horse does not incur the risk of being "carried off his legs," and of being run to a standstill. The rider can see how the other horses are going, and having ascertained this, can remain, for the present, where he is, or go in front. If he injudiciously forces the pace from the start, he will probably not find out

the mistake he has made until after the race is virtually lost.

Lord Clifden's race for the St. Leger admirably illustrates the argument used in the preceding paragraph. He was left thirty yards at the post, and before they had gone a quarter of a mile, he was a good 150 yards behind the leading horse. It is hardly a reflection upon living jockeys to say that no other rider breathing could have exhibited the same magnificent judgment of pace, the same incredible patience, and the same indomitable determination, as did John Osborne. The dealers in the dead could not understand what it meant when they saw the big horse coming up to his field at the Red House. They did *not* believe their eyes when they saw him in a good place on entering the straight, and many of them have not yet recovered the shock which they received, when his number was hoisted as the gallant winner of the gamest and best-ridden race which this generation has witnessed.

Horses, generally, go better and settle down in their gallop sooner with a lead than without one. This is especially true with two- and young three-year-olds, which are apt to sprawl about, and go on with all sorts of "calfish" tricks when they are in front, at least during

the first part of a race. Some horses, however, will never run kindly except when leading.

A capital jockey, who had not the reputation of always riding to win, once told me that he learned to appreciate the advantages of waiting, from observing the manner in which horses that made the running "came back" to him, when he was on "crocks" which had no chance, and of which he did not make very much "use."

If the orders be to wait, they should not be carried out, as is sometimes done by losing the start, or by pulling the horse out of his stride in order to get him behind at all hazards. The jockey, on the contrary, should get away as well as possible, and should settle down as soon as he can into a steady uniform pace, a trifle slower than that of those who are "making play," and should wait until they "come back" to him or until he arrives at the spot from which he sees it judicious to recover the lost ground. He should, then, gradually draw up to the front in time to make his effort, judging from the way the horses he most fears are going, and by the distance they are from him. He should then sit down in the saddle, "catch hold" of his horse's head, and trust to speed to make up lost ground and win the race.

It is a very general idea that light weights should make

the running, or at least have it made for them, and that heavy weights should wait. I am convinced, however, that, if the light weight is possessed of a fair turn of speed, it is sound policy for his jockey to wait with him—always supposing that the race is over a certain distance of ground, and that it is not run at too slow a pace—because, when it comes to racing at the finish, the light weight, being comparatively untired, ought then to have the best possible chance of successfully getting home. We must recollect that any moderate plater, if started fresh for the last few hundred yards of a long race, would beat the best and fastest stayer in the kingdom. Weight tires a horse, and breaks his heart quite as readily as pace will do. A horse, in fact, should be ridden more with regard to the distance he can compass, than to the weight he has to carry.

I may observe in passing, that it is a very general idea that weight “tells” on a horse, in a race, only after a certain distance has been run. I am inclined to think that this supposition is erroneous, and that every pound of extra weight, on a horse’s back, diminishes the rate of speed at which he can travel, even during the early portion of the journey, when he is quite untired.

Making the Running.—A jockey should never make

his own running, except when he is on a horse that frets or goes unkindly when there is anything in front of him or when he cannot get any other rider to force the pace fast enough, as did Pratt on Sornette in the Grand Prix for 1870.

If a jockey who has received orders to make use of his horse and not to wait, finds that the pace is made quite strong enough, he will, if he be a good judge, wait close at hand on the leader or leaders, and will be ready, when they are beaten, to go to the front, by which time he ought to know the exact state of affairs. If, however, he be incapable of acting up to the spirit of his orders, he will, probably, run his horse to a standstill, from being unable to "let well alone." Anyhow, he should endeavour to judge the pace, so that the horse will have just enough left in him to make his effort at the finish, in the event of being collared. I would never give orders to make running unless my horse was a comparatively good stayer, and was rather deficient in speed. One of this sort, even when carrying a heavy weight, would, as far as my experience goes, be best suited by the pace being made strong all through. Of course I am taking for granted that the jockey's sole idea is to win, and that he is not sent simply to "make play" for any one else.

"I may here mention an interesting fact, which is the cause, undoubtedly, of unsatisfactory performances in long-distance races. It is the waiting too long for, or more strictly speaking, perhaps, it should be called, the lying back too far from, the horse that is detailed to do the work. As a rule, the distance between the two is some eight or ten lengths. It should never exceed two or three lengths; for if you concede more, you are virtually making, not a fast, but a waiting race of it" (*Mr. William Day*).

It may be good policy, when the ground is heavy, for a light weight to make the running, as weight tells far more through "dirt," than when the horses can hear their feet rattle.

Waiting in Front.—Many horses are so impetuous that, in a slow-run race, they cannot be kept behind without more being "taken out" of them than the extra pace would do, were they allowed to go freely. If such an one be not a particularly good stayer, his jockey should wait in front with him; in other words, he should merely keep in front without forcing the running on his own account, and should simply conform to the pace of those immediately behind him, until the moment arrives for him to make his effort. A horse should never be kept back to

an extent which will cause him to "fight in his gallop." It is far better for him to be allowed to go at a speed just beyond that at which he would expend his strength in the air. I may observe that the pace will steady, as well as hold, most horses.

Keeping with one's Horses.—The easiest of all tactics to pursue is to keep with one's horses until the finish, and then to come away if one can.

General Remarks on Race Riding.—During a race, the jockey should, as a rule, stand in his stirrups until he sits down to finish.

He should avoid, as much as possible, keeping alongside any of the other horses, especially when he is on an impetuous animal ; for galloping stride for stride excites a horse, and throws him out of the even, steady stroke he ought to preserve. On the contrary, he should, if not wanting to force the running, keep behind, or a little to one side, of some horse in front, and wait till he gives way to take his place, or until the time comes for "getting through." It has often happened that the best horse in a race has lost it from some of the other jockeys racing directly alongside him, from time to time, in order to make him pull and tire himself out. In acting thus, a jockey, of course, intentionally sacrifices his own chance in

order to secure the defeat of an opponent. If a man finds that this "little game is being tried on" him, he should get in the track of one of the leaders, if there be any in front, so that his horse, seeing another directly before him, may not pull over much or break away ; or he might drop a little back.

During a race, a jockey should not try to pass any horse which is going as well and as strong as his own. He should, on the contrary, wait, or, as jockeys call it, "suffer," until the other begins to give way, when he may then draw up and take his place. I cannot too forcibly impress the necessity of *patience*.

When a jockey finds that his horse can go no faster than he is galloping at the time being, he should almost invariably take a pull at him, if only for half-a-dozen strides, in order to give him a chance of "coming again," which he could not do were he not eased off for a moment. Exceptions to this would be, when the jockey is close to the winning-post, has the lead, and finds he can keep it ; and when his horse is one of the jady kind which will not stand their mouths being touched.

If a jockey, who has waiting orders, finds that all the others are acting as if they had similar instructions, he should try to avoid "getting the slip" from any of them.

This manœuvre is carried out, when they are going slow, by a rider catching his horse by the head and sending him, it may be, five or six lengths in advance of his field, before the other jockeys are aware of his intention. Having gained this start, he should continue to go strong, and either make play all through, or let the others gradually catch him, while they are all going fast, so that he may have a bit in hand when it comes to a finish. These lengths, gained thus with but trifling exertion, when the pace was bad, may be worth as many pounds before the winning-post be passed. It is evident that it is no use giving one's field the slip, if one is not prepared to take advantage of it by going ahead at a strong pace.

It sometimes happens that the riders of the two best horses wait too long on each other, and thus allow their field a start which cannot be recovered in time. Or they may make the mistake of riding against each other, without thinking of the remainder of the field.

As a rule, in a match, if one's opponent be on a "cur," one should try to jump off with the lead, and cut out the running at once, whatever sort of a horse one may be on, provided he be but "game;" for nothing makes a rogue shut up so soon as being collared.

Inexperienced riders are often deluded into waiting

when they ought to go on, by a jockey pretending to flog, when in reality he is but whipping his boot. This dodge is, of course, only "tried on" by the rider of the speedier horse of the two, in the hope of inducing the man on the stayer to slacken speed from the idea that he has the race in hand, and that there is no use in hurrying. I need hardly say that, if a man perceives his opponent pursuing these tactics, he should keep on at his own pace or increase his speed, supposing, of course, that there is no other horse formidable in the race.

There are numberless instances of races won and lost by what I suppose I must call strategy—but which others, less charitable than I, might call by another name. A case in point occurred some years ago in a race of no fragrant memory in the minds of race-goers—the Liverpool Cup. The rider of the leading horse—the subsequent winner—suffered from the infirmity of deafness. The rider of the horse immediately behind the leader, seeing that he had nothing else to beat, holloed at the top of his voice: "Pull out of my way—you are beaten!" So great was the reputation of the formidable jockey behind him, that had our deaf friend heard him, there is no manner of doubt but that he would have "pulled out of the way." Fortunately he did *not* hear, and won very easily. This is

the only case, which I can quote, of the advantage of having defective hearing—at least, at racing.

I remember, however, a case that occurred abroad, in which rascality was frustrated by the fact of a would-be tempter having an impediment in his speech. A jockey who stammered very badly, had backed the horse he was riding, for a great deal of money. At the distance post he found himself collared by an outsider, which came up full of running. Knowing his man, he stuttered out to his unexpected opponent: “I—I—I w—w—will g—g—g—”; but, in the excitement of the moment, he could not complete his sentence. Brimful of mortification at his loss, he afterwards reproached his friend for not having listened to him, and said that he would have given him a hundred pounds to have pulled. “Then why the deuce didn’t you say so!” was all the consolation he got from his brother rogue.

If a jockey be behind two horses—the leading one close to the inside of the course, while the other is a little away from it, but in rear of the leader—he should never attempt to get through on the inside, unless he knows what sort of men he has to deal with, and that there is a good chance of their giving way to him; for all that the second jockey will have to do, in order to shut him in, will be to close up

on the leader. He will then be obliged to slacken speed, so as to let the second horse pass him, before he can get round on the outside. If the two leaders act in concert, they may slacken speed at the same time as he does, and keep him hemmed in until all chance of winning be passed. Many who ought to have known better, have been caught in this trap. As this manœuvre is accomplished without any crossing or jostling, it does not come under the head of foul riding, according to racing law.

It is, generally, dangerous to try to get through on the inside ; for many men will refuse to give way, or to pull out, and it is anything but pleasant to be shoved up against a post, or against the railings.

The "Old Castilian" reminds me that the watchful race-goer will see this well exemplified at many of our Northern meetings, where a strong rivalry exists between the North and South country riders. "Of this rivalry," says he, "I have a sound practical experience, as at Chester, some years ago, a jockey, who was riding a horse which belonged to a great friend of mine, and which we had backed for a considerable sum of money, had, I believe, unhappily given offence to a Northerner. Two of his confrères "nursed" our jockey so carefully that they twice very nearly had him over the rails between the bridge and

home, the result being that we were beaten a neck. Within a month my friend's mare, meeting her previous conqueror at sixteen pounds worse terms, on another course, beat him in a canter. By this dangerous practice, the jockey very nearly lost his life, and my friend and I lost our money."

Above all things a jockey should not "lie off" an absurdly long distance behind his field ; and when carrying a heavy burden, he should never allow a dangerous light weight to get too far in front.

A jockey ought to pay due attention to the nature of the ground over which he has to go, and to any peculiarities possessed by his mount. It is almost unnecessary, especially now that the course has been changed, to quote here the historical sheep-track on the Cambridgeshire Hill at Newmarket. Lord Poulett will long remember how his well-planned coup with Nu was upset by the jady Gardevisure, who owed her success entirely to her pilot having secured this much-coveted place. If a part of the course be heavy or hilly, the jockey might ease his horse a little ; and he might rattle him along down-hill, or where the ground was sound, always supposing that his legs and feet can stand it.

Fordham's winning the Derby on Sir Bevys in 1879,

furnishes a good illustration of the advantage of paying attention to the state of the ground in a race. The "going" on that day was very heavy and "holding." The great jockey, instead of coming sharp round the rails, took a clear sweep of his horses at the corner, and although he lost some distance by doing so, he got on the upper ground which was firm and sound, and thus managed to win.

Particularly on a large open course like that at Newmarket, and especially before riding a long race, a jockey should study the various landmarks; so that he may know at any moment how far he has got to go. I could mention more than one instance of the Cesarewitch having been apparently lost through a jockey not knowing how far away he was from the winning-post.

Peculiarities in the Shape and Action of Horses.—Horses with short, upright pasterns are most unsuited to go down a hill—the running of Vauban, the Two Thousand winner, in the Derby, was a good example of this fact—neither do they act particularly well on hard ground. Animals with sloping pasterns generally like to "hear their feet rattle," and do not get their legs jarred when going down an incline.

The best kind of horse for going down a hill, is a light

moving, quick striding animal, who has oblique shoulders, sloping pasterns and sound legs and feet ; but a long striding horse, especially if he be a bit straight in front, is seldom at home except on the flat. On this subject, the *Sporting Times* remarks : " We incline to the opinion that on the Derby course Iroquois would always beat Peregrine, just as Bend Or beat Robert the Devil. Very big horses like very big men, do not climb hills well, and coming down shakes them all to pieces. It is the light springy sort who are the best at the game, and of such is Iroquois."

Horses with rather high action and good hocks are the best to climb a hill. The possession of large broad feet is most useful on a heavy course, from the mechanical advantage they have over small hoofs. A compact, quick-striding horse, like what Freeman was, is well adapted for a cramped course, like the Roodee at Chester ; but a big long-striding animal—Lord Clifden, for instance—requires a straight level course, like that at Doncaster, on which to display his powers. The length and height of a horse does not matter so much, provided he has quick hind action and gets his hocks well under him. Knight of the Garter, who was one of this sort, though an immensely long horse, squandered his field in the Chester Cup for 1869, with 9 st. 1 lb. up. Also Asteroid, who was built on a large

scale, won in 1863, carrying 9 st. 4 lbs., beating eleven others. At Liverpool, which is a very roundabout course, the Cup was won in 1872 and 1873 by those big horses, Vanderdecken, 3 yrs., and Sterling, 5 yrs. The former, carrying 7 st. 8 lbs., beat a field of twenty; and the latter, with 9 st. 4 lbs. up, defeated fourteen others. Unsound horses, as a rule, act best on a soft course, especially those with any tendency to laminitis or navicular disease. Old horses which are somewhat stiff on their legs, should have a steady preliminary canter to warm them up before starting. Certain horses appear to have a special liking for certain courses and varieties of ground. Game, honest horses are often several pounds better, when facing a hill, than one with a suspicion of "softness," though they might be as nearly equal as possible on the flat.

As a rule, lazy horses which require riding to make them extend themselves, are far better stayers than the impetuous sort. We may often observe the fact of a horse being "trained to the hour," by his becoming a trifle dainty in his feeding, and lacking, when taken at a walk, some of his accustomed fire. Admiral Rous, speaking generally, remarks: "Large horses like big men, run fast and seldom stay a distance, but they can carry weight."

The Seat when Finishing.—When a jockey wants to

FIG. 31.



To face page 147.

finish, he should sit down in the centre of his saddle with his seat as much under him as possible (see Fig. 31). He should catch a good hold of the horse's head so as to collect him at each stride; should lean slightly back; grip the flaps of the saddle tightly with his knees, and draw his feet well back, so that the weight at each stroke of the horse's hind legs may not come with a jerk on the stirrups, which would cause it by re-action to be thrown to the rear, and would thus increase the work the horse has to do. The hands and arms should yield to the extension of the horse's neck at each stride, without, however, slackening the reins in the slightest. The rider should avoid the unsightly trick of working his hands in a circle round and round; they ought on the contrary, to give and take in the direction the horse is going, and ought to have no side motion. The hands should be brought within four or five inches of each other, and should be kept low, say—not more than two or three inches above the withers.

The rider having assumed this position, should conform to the movements of the horse, so that the weight may impede him as little as possible (see page 36). The seat and thighs of the rider should appear as if they were glued to the saddle, and there ought not to be the slightest approach to any bumping up and down. Whether the

jockey can, or cannot, relieve the horse of weight, by giving a forward impulse to his body when the hind legs are on the ground, is a question which does not concern us here, nor is it one of practical application. In this connection I may quote the utterance of an experienced Newmarket trainer, who, when the owner asked him to whom he should give a mount in a race for a good stake : "Oh, sir, put up Archer. He packs himself up so, that I believe he rides seven pounds lighter than his real weight." The owner did, and Archer won. It is sufficient for us to know that when a man sits down and finishes in proper style, the horse is enabled to travel faster than he can do when any other kind of seat is adopted. We know that "dead weight," over which the muscles of the jockey cannot exercise any influence, is particularly disadvantageous at a finish, however well placed it may be. We are also aware that if a man be tired or weak, however "still" he may sit, his horse will not be able to gallop by any means as fast as he would do, were the rider fresh and strong. These facts seem to indicate that the jockey can afford his horse a certain amount of mechanical assistance which cannot be derived from the reins, which, though they may serve to "collect" him, or to retard his speed, are powerless to give him any onward impulse. As the legs

of the rider are the only other parts which connect him to the horse, the "lift"—if there be one—must proceed from them, and may be the result of the weight being, more or less, taken off the horse's back at each instant, as his hind feet make their stroke. Colonel Greenwood, in his excellent book, 'Hints on Horsemanship,' considers that such mechanical assistance can be given. We know that the rider may aid the horse by adjusting his weight, during each stride, so that it may impede the animal's movements as little as possible; but whether he can give him any further assistance, or not, is a question which I am unable to decide.

A man requires a good deal of practice to finish well; but, if he does it badly, he is certain to impede the horse's movements by rolling about in the saddle. Hence, if he be not expert in the art, he should not attempt to practise it, but should endeavour to sit as still as possible, catch a good hold of his horse's head, and should assume the position which he finds to be the easiest one for the horse and for himself. As the action of finishing is very fatiguing to the jockey, he does not, as a rule, "sit down" before he comes to the distance post.

On Finishing.—At a finish it is generally best to be on the side farthest away from the judge. When two horses

are coming up the straight, on perfectly even terms, the farthest-off one will, of necessity, appear to the spectator to be ahead of the other. It is, therefore, very difficult for the judge, in a close finish, to efface entirely from his mind an impression of, say, ten or twelve seconds' duration. It has happened that when the actual winner has finished close under the judge's box, that he was not even placed by that official. If the jockey cannot use his whip in his left hand, he might keep on the whip hand of his most dangerous opponent, who might, if he was on his near side, close in, either intentionally or by his horse swerving, and would thus prevent him from using the whip with the right hand. If the horse has a tendency to swerve under punishment, to the outside of the course, it may be just as well to have something on the near side, so as to keep him straight.

Before sitting down to finish, it is generally advisable, especially if the race has been run at a strong pace, to take a pull at one's horse for a few strides, so as to enable him to catch his wind, and to collect himself before he makes his effort.

Care should be taken not to suddenly begin to finish on a long-striding horse, who should, on the contrary, be prepared for his effort, so that he may not be thrown out

of his stride. A quick, short-striding animal will dash into full speed in an instant.

It is a dangerous and often a fatal mistake for a jockey to ease his horse, or to cease riding him, when leading and close to the winning-post ; for by doing so, he may make him "stop," and may then be unable to get him into his stride again, in time to "stall off a rush" from one of the others. Even the great George Fordham was once caught napping in this way, when riding for his then constant employer, Mr. Ten Broeck. Neither of the two ever forgot how Sam Rogers swooped down on Fordham, who was riding Amy. She had, to all intents and purposes, won her race, when the Demon took a pull, thinking that the other one was beaten, and then he could not set her going again in time.

At a finish, if one finds that the leader has the race easy, one might get directly behind him, on the chance of his slackening speed to look round, or to gaze at his boots, or at the stand, and then one may, with a rush on the side away from which the other's head is turned, manage to beat him on the post, before he can set his horse going again.

Many an important event has been lost from over-confidence of the rider of the leading horse, who, when winning easily, has tried to make a race of it for "the

gallery," or has been cajoled into slackening his speed by one of the other jockeys, and has then been unable to make an effort in time when required to do so.

As a last piece of advice, I would recommend the tyro never to be too anxious "to get home," and never "to draw it too fine."

On Riding Rogues.—As the generality of "rogues" will run kindly enough, until they are pressed or hustled, a jockey when riding one of this sort, should, as a rule, make the running, or at least keep with the leaders, and, if he finds that he is winning easily at the finish, he should, on no account, take a pull, or allow any of the others, if he can help it, to close up on him; for many rogues will either not try a yard, or win by "the length of a street." The jockey should sit still, ride as quietly as possible, and should do all he can to persuade the jady one that he is running away. It often happens that the more the rider pulls, the faster will the "rogue" go. The jockey should allow him to make his own running and effort while interfering with him as little as possible. Horses learn so quickly what a race means, that I believe better results than we often get would be obtained, were we to trust more to their judgment than we do, as to how they should be ridden in their races.

Rogues run very much better in a match or in a very small field than they do in a crowd.

"Of this indisputable truth," remarks Captain Jones, "I have had ample proof. It has always been a matter of surprise to me, that trainers do not teach young horses their lessons in scenes and under circumstances resembling, as much as possible, those under which they have, subsequently to fight their battles, and, oftentimes, to carry their master's fortunes. I am led to this reflection by an old reminiscence of a horse of my own, which I had bought as a two-year-old. He was as well bred as Eclipse, and of real racing shape and make. He had run but once as a two-year-old. I bought him in October for a good round sum, by the advice of a friend of ripe and rare judgment. He wintered well. Wanting to try him alongside another horse early in the year, I put four of them together, and galloped them a mile *in their clothing* far away from sight or sound. To my delighted amazement, the young one seemed to hold the old horse (one of some pretensions) the whole distance, and was only beaten half a length. If this form were correct, there was nothing beyond my reach for that year, not even the Derby; as the horses were carrying boys of the same weight, while my old horse, which had won good races before this (and, I

may add, since), would have made small work of three-year-olds at even weights. I believed I had a treasure, but to make assurance doubly sure, I determined to try them regularly, with jockeys in boots and breeches, and as close an imitation of the real thing as I could devise. Alas for the result! The young horse was beaten two hundred yards! He could not be got to gallop in public, although he was a perfect kill-devil at exercise.

"I gave him another chance in a good class race with an 8 st. 10 lbs. man on his back. The brute led his field to the distance, and looked like coming in alone. Directly the shouting commenced, and he could see the crowd, he shut up like a clasp-knife, and was shortly after relegated to the cab-rank, in which I hope he will long live to expiate the sin of the unfulfilled promise of his youth."

If a jady horse manages to run a dead heat in a race for which there are several starters, the chances are in favour of his winning the deciding heat, supposing that he has not had much punishment. I was much impressed with this fact on seeing the running of *The Ghost*, in *The Clewer Welter*, at the Windsor July Meeting for 1877. This arrant thief, who was a non-stayer, ran a dead heat, *Custance* up, in the race in question, with *Mr. Gretton's Dovedale*, steered by Cannon. I knew the mare could stay

a bit, so backed her in the deciding heat, and lost my money; for The Ghost won cleverly. Although the second journey was all against him, he ran quite a different horse to what he did the first time of asking.

One may try the effect of giving a rogue, a quarter of an hour before his race, half a bottle (not more) of port or sherry in order to make him run kindly. Though horses can take comparatively enormous quantities of certain drugs with impunity; still they cannot drink much more than twice the amount of spirits that an ordinary man can, without injuriously feeling its effects. I have had good results with $\frac{1}{2}$ oz. of bromide of potassium given in some water to a horse half an hour before his race. This drug has a very soothing effect on the nerves.

Nothing is more calculated to make a horse a rogue than running him a severe race when he is out of condition.

On Riding Pullers.—Although a curb is objectionable from its tendency to make a horse go “round” and high; still, if the jockey cannot hold the horse in any kind of snaffle, it is better for him to use a curb, taking care to put it low down in his mouth, than to take the chance of his running himself to a standstill, or to be obliged to saw his mouth or pull his head about, so as to keep him in his

place. Speaking to and humouring a horse a little will often make him stop pulling. The remarks I have made on page 85 about dropping the hands when a horse gets his head up, and taking a pull the moment he lowers it, may be referred to here. I have remarked on page 189 that thin snaffles have a tendency to make horses pull. If possible, a large smooth snaffle should be used ; or a chain snaffle may be employed. We might try the effect of a standing martingale fixed to the rings of a snaffle (see page 258). We may take for granted, especially as the pace will hold most of them, that it is the fault of the jockey if a horse runs away in a race.

As the majority of hard, determined pullers are done running when they stop pulling, being then left without the power of making an effort, a jockey ought to be particularly careful to "keep a bit in hand" with a horse of this sort.

That hard pullers often fail to stay is frequently the fault of their riders. I quite agree with Hiram Woodruff, the celebrated American trainer, when he remarks that "it is often said that a horse cannot pull hard and last ; and this is contrary to the facts that I am about to mention. Trustee lasted ; and he was a hard puller. Captain McGowan lasted ; and he was the hardest-pulling horse in

America, I suppose. Dexter pulls a pound or two, I can assure you ; and he has shown his capacity to go on. The truth is, that the pulling horses last well enough, but the riders do not last so long. It is just so with the runners."

Orders.—As a rule, never give orders, if your jockey is a fairly good one, though the trainer might briefly tell him the horse's good and bad qualities from a racing point of view. It is always injudicious to lay down precise directions, such as to keep a certain number of lengths behind the leading horse, who may be sent from the start to cut out the running for another, at a pace which might cause him to collapse long before the distance post is reached. Or to wait on some particular horse—a proceeding which has been the cause of many a mistake ; for the dreaded one may turn out a rank duffer which is unable to go fast, so that the jockey, by waiting on him, may have, in the meantime, allowed the others to get so far ahead that he will not be able to catch them before it is too late ; or he may run himself to a standstill in endeavouring to keep the lead all through. If a jockey be capable of carrying out minute instructions, he will certainly be clever enough to accomplish the far easier and more profitable task of acting up to the spirit of broad general directions. As a

rule, it is much better to ride a race so as to suit the capabilities of one's own horse (with which one ought to be fully acquainted), than to devote one's entire attention to the weak points of the supposed dangerous horse or horses, which must naturally be problematical. For this reason, I would never hamper a jockey's judgment by laying out the programme cut and dry, but would simply tell him my horse's peculiarities, and what kind of running would most likely bring him home. For instance, with a fast horse in a one-and-a-half-mile race, instead of telling an inexperienced rider to wait so many lengths behind, I might say, "Get off well, if you can ; settle down into a steady pace, and if you are all going fast, don't mind about the others getting a bit ahead. When you have gone about half the journey, gradually begin to creep up, until you get within a couple of lengths of the horses which are going strongest in front of you at the distance post ; take a pull for a few strides if you find your horse at all distressed, and make your effort the moment you think you can get home." If the animal then gets beaten, the probability is that the winner was the better horse of the two at the weights and distance run—a fact which owners of defeated horses often overlook.

If I remember rightly, it was Mr. F. Swindells, than

whom no one, in any age, has ever pursued a more successful turf career, who replied to a jockey that asked him how he was to ride his horse : "Nay, lad, that is thy business to know how the horse should be ridden ; I cannot teach thee."

On the Use of Spurs during a Race.—Spurs ought to be put on for a race, unless the horse runs unkindly when they are used, or the jockey is such a bad rider that he cannot spur properly at a finish, or cannot help touching his horse with them. After taking one's spurs off to ride a rogue, it may be just as well, in the preliminary canter, to touch him a couple of times with one's heels in order to show him that he need not fear punishment from them. Some horses, on the contrary, will not extend themselves unless the rider has spurs on.

The proper way to use the spurs is to turn out the toes and strike as close behind the girth as possible, without raising the heels in the slightest when doing so. The feet should on no account be swung back. Nothing is more unworkmanlike than scoring the horse's sides with the spurs by raising or drawing back the heels. Bad riders not unfrequently spur a horse about the shoulders, especially when jumping ; while men, who never ought to have been given a mount, have been known to spur a horse on his

stifles. When inferior horsemen use spurs, they ought to have the necks of the spurs as short as possible.

As a rule, a horse should not be touched with the spurs until the jockey sits down to finish, when three or four digs will be quite enough to make any ordinary animal exert himself to the utmost. An inexperienced rider ought to endeavour to make his horse go fast at a finish by catching a good hold of his head and "riding him out," and not by spurring or flogging him.

On one occasion, Hayhoe, who was training the late Baron Rothschild's two-year-old filly, Tomato, told Edwin Martin to ride her a gallop with spurs, and to touch her with them, just to show her what they were like. The jockey did so, and the filly finished her work in a satisfactory manner. A few days after, Martin got on Tomato with spurs, to ride her a trial, but she refused to move a step, and began to shiver and buck-jump as if something was wrong. Martin dismounted, and they took off the saddle, thinking it might be pinching her, or that a thorn or thistle might have got into the pannel. As the gear was found to be all right, Martin remounted, but with the same result. At last, at Hayhoe's suggestion, the spurs were taken off. The moment that was done, the filly walked away as quiet as a lamb, thereby giving them to

know, as plain as words could have told, what her ideas on spurring were. During her future career she never had spurs used with her, and always ran kind and game.

Many trainers do not allow spurs to be used with their mares when running.

On the Use of the Whip.—When hands and spurs fail to make a horse go fast enough to win his race, we may use the whip if it be a very “near thing,” to squeeze the last ounce out of the horse. Horses, when ridden by a workman, will undoubtedly, under the whip, make a last effort which cannot be obtained by any other means of punishment. This effort, speaking in general terms, may make a difference of a length, perhaps even of two lengths, in some rare cases. Recollecting the risk we run of spoiling a horse’s temper for the rest of his life by flogging him, we may take it for granted that we should not use the whip if we have to trust to it to make up more than two lengths to secure the judge’s verdict. A horse, as Mr. Edwin Martin, the well-known Newmarket trainer, once remarked to me, cannot at the end of a race, go farther than a hundred yards at his very utmost speed without beginning to shorten his stride and go slower; hence we may conclude that our last resource, the whip, should not be used until we are within a hundred yards of

the winning post. Practically speaking, the whip should be very rarely indeed "picked up" before the last thirty or forty yards, nor should more than two or three cuts be given. When a jockey begins to flog, as many of them do, two or three hundred yards from home, we need not be surprised at seeing the horse, after answering the call for ten or a dozen strides, go slower and slower as he nears the judge's box. The horse is then probably condemned as a rogue, and the jockey is praised as a resolute finisher. Some of our best jockeys, now and then flourish the whip at the finish without hitting the horse, as a "bit of kid," or to make the animal travel faster than he is doing without punishing him.

Mr. Edwin Martin tells me that he teaches his boys to carry their sticks in the left hand, so that they may use the whip equally well with both hands. Unless a lad is left-handed, he will have no difficulty with the right. If a horse be inclined to jump about, it will be very awkward for the jockey if he can use the whip—not to punish, but simply to steady him—with only one hand. Martin very justly advises, that, on right-handed courses, the whip, as a rule, should be carried in the left hand. A horse, when he does so, usually hangs or bears off to the left. It is well, he observes, to hold the whip in the outside hand, *i.e.*

in the one farthest away from one's opponents, so that the horse's attention may be balanced, if I may use the term. If both the whip and "the field" are on one side, the horse will not go as straight and level as he would do were they on different sides of him.

Bad as the spurs are, with respect to ruining a horse's temper and breaking his heart, their evil effects are as nothing compared with those of the whip. I may safely say that a large percentage of horses which have been once severely punished with the whip by a powerful rider, are thereby rendered useless, as race-horses for the remainder of their lives, whenever they have to contend in a close finish. Cecil, in his excellent little book, 'Stable Practice,' remarks about the whip, that "not much benefit often results from it, except with game and indolent animals; and in using both that and the spurs, unless the horse is found to respond to the call, good feeling and prudence forbid their use. Inflicting pain on an animal when he is doing his best, is not only wanton cruelty, but appears something like punishing him because he is going as fast as his powers will enable him. Horses have retentive memories, and there is no doubt many will cease to struggle at the moment they are called upon to do so, from reminiscences of former punishment."

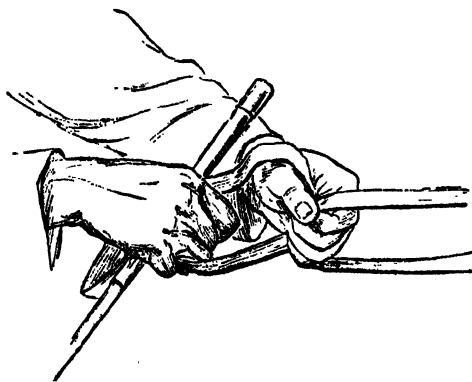
A jockey should strike a horse with the whip nowhere else except just behind the girth, unless when preventing him from swerving, etc. When he is hit in this manner, the side away from the whip hand will be hurt much more than the other, so that the horse will not be so liable to swerve as he would be, were he hit in any other way. Besides, hitting him thus on the centre of the body will not "double him up," nor make him change his leg, as striking him on the flank or shoulder might do. A jockey who punishes a horse about the sheath, or rips his sides with the spurs, is a disgrace to his profession.

During a race, the whip should be held lash down, while the hand that holds it should be on the reins; for if it be kept up, the horse will very probably watch it, expecting a cut every moment, and his attention will thereby be distracted from his work. It should be held six or seven inches from the butt end, so that the rider may be ready to change it into the other hand without delay. When the moment comes to use the whip, it should be quickly "picked up," in the manner described on the next and succeeding pages, the reins should be grasped firmly in the other hand, the rider should sit well down in his saddle, keep his shoulders square, lean back, draw his feet back, and keep his body as steady as possible, so that it may

not get any sway from the arm, which might interfere with the motion of the horse, and thus jeopardise his chance of winning.

If the whip is to be used with the right hand, the left hand—of course supposing that both are on the reins, see Fig. 4 page 4—should let go the slack of the off rein,

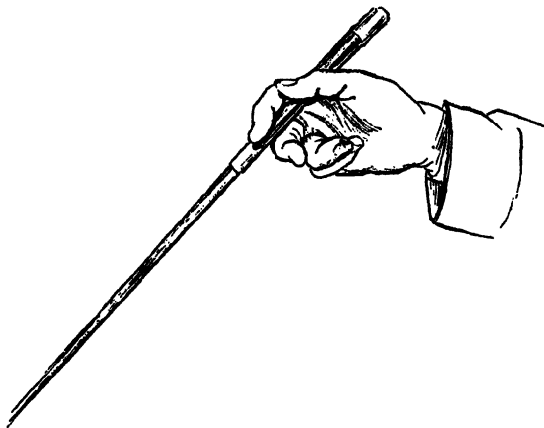
Fig. 32.



should then slide forward on the near rein, and grasp the off rein in the full of the hand, as shown in Fig. 32. The left hand should go forward in a somewhat circular manner, and not directly to the front, so that a perfectly even feeling on both reins may be preserved the whole time. It is necessary to shorten the reins in this way ; for when catching hold of a horse's head with one hand, the reins should naturally be shorter than when they are held in

both hands. Both reins being now grasped in the left hand, the right hand, which holds the whip, quits them, and swings the whip slightly forward, so as to bring it between the first and second fingers (see Fig. 33). The whip is now quickly swung round to the rear and brought

Fig. 33.

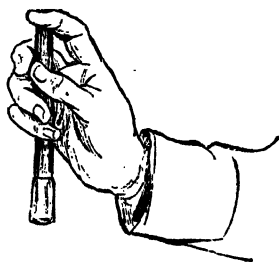


up into the position shown in Fig. 34. The first finger slips round the handle of the whip, which is then caught firmly in the hand, and the cuts, which should rarely exceed two or three, are given straight down, close behind the rider's

boot, without any backward swing. The cuts should be timed so that the horse may be struck, just as his hind legs make their stroke.

The whip hand should not, as a rule, be raised higher than the rider's ear.

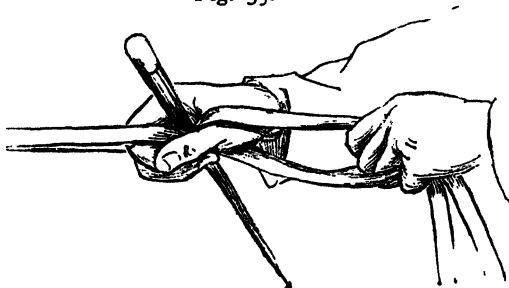
Fig. 34.



Though explaining how to change the reins and pick up the whip has occupied some space, these actions can be performed, after a little practice, with the utmost rapidity. The moment for using the whip is such a critical one, that it is essential a well-practised method be adopted, so that

the rider may run no chance of making a fatal muddle with the reins. Such mistakes, which would appear to be hardly excusable in an amateur, are not unfrequently committed by professionals who fancy themselves not a little. How often do we see jockeys "let go the reins" the moment they use the whip! It always strikes me, that the

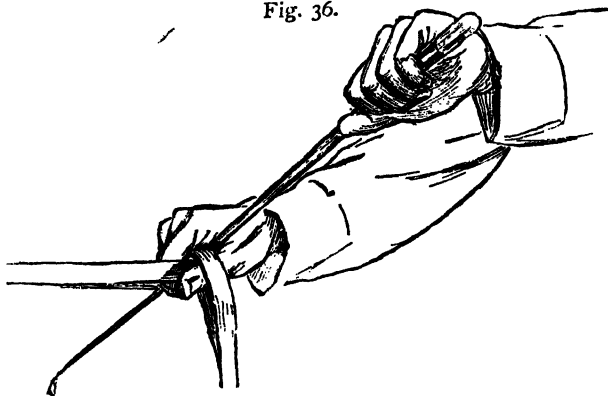
Fig. 35.



reason they commit this unpardonable error, is that they do not slide the bridle hand forward to shorten the reins before the whip hand quits them, as ought to be done. When there is little time to act and none to think, the mere knowledge of the proper method of doing a thing cannot be utilised. An action, however, which has been sufficiently often repeated to become automatic, will be instinctively performed without the necessity of reflection, on the senses receiving the required stimulus.

When the whip has to be changed from the right to the left hand, the former should grasp the reins in front of the latter, in the manner before described (see Fig. 35); the left hand should now quit the reins, seize the whip (see Fig. 36), and draw it through the right hand.

Fig. 36.



A novice should not use a whip; for none but a good rider can sit still, hold his horse together with one hand and flog at the same time. Although spurs do not present these difficulties, they are much less efficient than a whip in the hand of a "workman."

Effect of Punishment on Horses.—Without wishing to be "hard" on a very meritorious class of men, I must say that a large number of horses are annually ruined for life by needless punishment. Jockeys are apt to attach

too much weight to the opinion of the public, and, consequently, often "ride a horse out," rather than ease him, when pursuit is hopeless.

Although the view backers take of "cutting a horse to pieces" is very different to the one held by a humane owner; still it is a difficult point to decide whether a jockey is always justified in punishing a horse to the utmost of his power, if he thinks that by so doing he has any chance of winning. If he knows that he has no chance, and persists in using whip and spur, he ought never to get another mount. Regarding the matter as an owner and racing man, I hold that a jockey should not "knock about" a young promising horse or valuable old one, for an unimportant event, on a mere off chance of winning. He should be most particular not to "squeeze" one which has any suspicion of jadiness. Though it is too much to expect that a jockey should take a sentimental view of punishment; still he ought to regard the interests of his employer, within honourable limits, and should be averse to ruin the noble animal by whose exertions he earns his bread. The most forcible argument I can use against punishment is that, in nine cases out of ten, it defeats its own object.

CHAPTER VIII.

STEEPLECHASE RIDING.

BEFORE riding a chase, the jockey should go round and carefully examine the course, if it is strange to him, in order to find out the easiest and safest parts of the fences, which knowledge may be most useful to him when his horse is tired; to mark where the "taking off" and "landing" is soundest; and to observe the nature of the ground, so that he may know when to travel fast, where the "going" is good, or when to take a pull at his horse, where it is heavy, or where, as may occur over a natural line of country, he may make a slight detour with advantage.

He should, above all things, make up his mind to go straight, and should never allow his horse the chance of even trying to refuse. If he knows that his mount is incapable of making a wilful mistake, he should merely regulate the pace, and should, on no account, interfere with his fencing; for a pull at his mouth, or a touch of the whip or spurs, at a critical moment, can only tend to make him shorten or lengthen his stride, and, conse-

quently, to blunder. If the horse be dangerously impetuous, he should "drop his hands," speak soothingly to him, and sit as still as possible. If he be liable to chance his fences, and not jump big enough, the jockey should take a good hold of his head and should rouse him when approaching them. He should, however, avoid, unless obliged to do so, hitting the horse with the whip when in the act of jumping, as the sight of it is apt to distract his attention, and may make him blunder over the fence, or to refuse, which he can easily do when the rider has only one hand on the reins. Pressure of the legs and the voice should always be used as a stimulus in preference to the spurs; and the spurs, to the whip. It sometimes happens, however, that in the last stride we instinctively feel that the horse is not going to jump big enough, whereupon our heels close, or our whip comes down in response to the thought which flashes in a moment through our brain. These instinctive impulses, being the results of long practice, very rarely lead the experienced rider into error. The jockey should not allow a horse which is liable to refuse, to imagine that he may do so with impunity, because the rider sits quietly and appears to trust to his honour; for although all horses know when their rider funks, some of them often seem to assume that he does so

when such is not really the case. Most horses jump best when they are steadied a little, say about forty or fifty yards from their fences, and are then allowed to go their own pace at them. I am, of course, here referring to steeplechasing, and not to crossing country on occasions when the horseman can take his own time.

The horse's head should never be let loose. An extra pull should be taken, when going through heavy ground, so as to make him shorten his stride.

The rider should endeavour, as a rule, to get away in front for the first couple of fences. He will thus avoid being jostled, or "carried out," by any determined refusers which may happen to start; and will also have a clear view of his country, instead of it being obscured by a crowd in front of him. As the first two or three fences are generally low and easy, there is little risk in racing at them on a fresh horse, who, if he has any pretensions to the name of a steeplechaser, ought to permit this small liberty to be taken with him. When the rider finds his road is clear, he may settle down and ride as he thinks fit. If the ground is dusty, as very often happens in India, it is all-important to get well away at the drop of the flag.

A jockey should take his own line, and should not ride

close in the track of any other horse ; for if he does so, he will, in the event of his leader making a mistake, run a great risk of coming to grief, with the off chance of jumping on and perhaps killing his man. Besides that, his animal will not be able to see his fences properly if he has another right in front of him. If the rider is on a horse which has a fine turn of speed, but requires a lead, he may keep thirty or forty yards behind any clever fencer which is going fast enough.

When a man is on a horse which he can trust, and is free to take his own line, he should, within reasonable limits, jump as close as he can to the inside flags, so as to save ground. An inexperienced rider often loses a lot of distance by needlessly keeping away from the inside of the course.

Unless the field are racing very fast, the jockey should moderate his pace somewhat when going at high fences. Of course he should go fast at water, so as to be able to clear it with ease ; but he should be most careful to ride the horse up to his bridle, and get his hind quarters well under him by the pressure of his legs, and if need be, by a touch of the spurs, so that the animal may not overjump himself, but shall land and get away again in his stride. Of the two faults it is better to go too slow, with the

horse properly in hand, than very fast with a loose rein at water.

A man should avoid, if he can, riding a little, say half a length, behind an opponent that is alongside him in a chase when nearing a fence ; for in such a case, the horse will be very apt to "take off" at the same instant the other does so, and consequently, to jump too soon. When galloping side by side, horses seem to like going stride for stride with each other. Besides this, the one that is a little behind may pay more attention to looking at his adversary than at his fence. I have seen on different occasions horses come to grief in this manner and also from an opponent who has a slight lead, "rushing them" at their jumps with the intention of thus bringing them down.

If a horse be alongside another in a chase, it is usually much better to have him on one's near side than on the off ; for if horses refuse, they generally do so to the left, the cause for this often being the injudicious use of the whip on some previous occasion. The fact of a horse being on one's near side when coming to a fence, lessens the risk of his running into one ; and having him there may, also, prevent one's own horse refusing if he be that way inclined. When riding a horse which is disposed "to run out," one may carry the whip in the hand to which he shows a tendency to refuse.

Stirrup leathers for riding across country should generally be a hole or two shorter than for the flat.

The remarks I have made on flat race riding apply within certain limits, equally well to chasing.



CHAPTER IX.

WASTING FOR RACE RIDING.

MEN waste for riding, either to keep down their weight for a considerable time, as jockeys have to do during the racing season, or for one particular race or meeting. In the first case, a man should chiefly rely on abstinence in the matter of food and drink, and exercise ; as physic and heavy sweats continued for a long time would destroy his strength and nerve. In training, the diet should be limited to fresh meat boiled, grilled, or roast—on no account stewed or fried—plain boiled fish without sauce, dry biscuit, toast, and stale bread, with a small variety of vegetables that do not put up weight, such as onions, which are particularly useful in this respect, but on no account should butter or oil be used with them. Salt ought to be the only condiment allowed. Jockeys generally confine themselves to cold meat and biscuit, which food palls quickly on their appetite. Potatoes, fresh bread, cakes, rice, butter, milk, fat of every kind, soups, puddings, sugar, sweets, stews, minces,

everything containing an excess of fat, sugar or starch, and salted or spiced meat which would make a man thirsty, should be carefully avoided. It is a well-known fact, that to keep in good health one should eat daily a fair proportion of vegetables, in order that certain salts contained in them may be furnished to the system. By cooking, a large proportion of these salts being lost, a man in training should eat every day, so as to obviate the necessity of consuming a great bulk, a small quantity of lettuces, raw tomatoes, onions, celery, cucumber, radishes or cress, or in their place a little fresh fruit, with the exception of those which contain much sugar or starchy matter.

When wasting, one should avoid eating large quantities of meat ; for doing so produces great languor and depression. "The first effect of an excessive meat diet is not that of increased strength, but rather a feeling of heaviness and weariness in the muscles, with nervous excitation often rising to sleeplessness, which he [Ranke] attributes to the accumulation in the blood of the alkaline salts of the meat " (*Carpenter*).

The drink should be restricted to water, weak tea without milk or sugar, light claret and water, or very weak spirits and water. The weaker these are taken the better ; for tea, coffee, and alcohol check waste of tissue. A man in

strict training will find it judicious not to drink aerated waters ; for they are so refreshing that it is hard to resist taking more than is advisable. As fluid of any sort puts up weight, a man should only drink that kind of which a little will quench thirst. I need hardly say that the less spirits a man takes the steadier will be his nerves. If this regimen be strictly adhered to, the jockey need do nothing further than to take lots of exercise. By this I mean that he should not flinch from doing a twenty or a twenty-five-mile walk. Riding four or five training gallops every morning will get a man fitter than anything I know ; but as this is a luxury in which heavy weights cannot indulge, they ought to walk, play racquets, lawn tennis, or cricket, and take all the healthy exercise they can get, whether on horseback or on foot, short of going in for regular sweats. A saline draught may be necessary now and then. Lamplough's pyretic saline or Eno's fruit salt is probably the most agreeable laxative, though Epsom salts are by far the most effectual aperient for getting off weight.

The following would be about the correct style of daily food : A steak or a couple of chops—done on the gridiron, but not in the fryingpan—a couple of slices of stale bread or dry crisp toast, a few plain boiled onions, a bunch of radishes or cress, a stick of celery, or a couple of tomatoes,

and a cup of tea, with a very little milk and without sugar for breakfast. A slice or two of cold meat, a hard biscuit and a glass of water for lunch. A couple of slices from a joint, plain boiled onions, a biscuit, a stick of celery and half a pint of claret with water for dinner. By pursuing this system, with plenty of ordinary exercise, a man in a month or so will gradually get down to within five or six pounds of his lightest riding weight, which if required can be attained by a couple of sweats and a dose of physic.

I am glad to find that John Osborne and Edwin Martin advocate the system of long quick walks without sweaters, and strict moderation in food without actual Banting, in preference to that of violent purgatives and heavy sweats. Both have repeatedly got off 28 lbs. in a fortnight or three weeks, and felt all the better for it. Regular sweats depress a man so much and make him so nervous that he cannot continue taking them in an effectual manner for a lengthened period. A jockey will find that after taking off five or six pounds by a single sweat, he will put it nearly all on again by eating even a very moderate meal. The first few long walks will not take much weight off; but if they be continued, they will rapidly waste off the superfluous flesh. The system of long walks and abstinence as regards food, requires so much fixity of purpose and self-

denial, that it is easy to imagine how unpopular it is among so-called fashionable jockeys. If an aperient be required, the jockey may put, as Edwin Martin used to do, a teaspoonful of Epsom salts in half a cup of warm tea, which should be drunk and then followed by the remaining half-cupful. This will produce an excellent effect without injury to the health.

But if a man is too lazy to walk and fast, he may Bant ; though he should then dispense with his frugal lunch and eat and drink as little as he can manage to do with, at breakfast and dinner. The training may commence with a strong dose of physic, say three Cockle's pills at night and an ounce of Epsom salts next morning. On that day, nothing beyond a quiet walk should be done ; but on the next and succeeding days he should take a sweat, and about every third day an ounce of salts the first thing in the morning. On the day physic is taken, a walk without sweaters will be enough. The sweat should be arranged in something of the following fashion : a pair of long knickerbocker stockings, over which a pair of thick worsted ones and a pair of boots for the feet ; three long drawers of "yellow sweating flannel"—which is made for the purpose—and a pair of trousers ; or if these sweating drawers be not available, a pair of drawers and a couple of pairs of thick cloth

trousers for the legs ; four yellow flannel body sweaters, or their equivalent in flannel shirts, with a waistcoat or two, a shooting coat and a greatcoat for the body ; a pair of warm gloves for the hands ; a large woollen comforter wrapped round and round the neck ; and a couple of large cloth caps pulled down over the ears, will do as far as clothing is concerned. A pair of thick woollen socks, folded as if they were about to be put on the feet, are a capital substitute for gloves. Great care should be taken that every part be protected from the air ; for if even the hands or neck be left bare, perspiration will be materially checked. With this amount of clothes on a warm day, most men will find that a sharp walk of eight miles will be as much as they can do without overtaxing their strength. One should arrange, if possible, so as to have the wind at one's back when returning home. The walk being finished, the man in training should lie down with a lot of rugs heaped over him and remain thus as long as he can, which usually will not be more than ten minutes or a quarter of an hour. During this time the heavy oppressed feeling about the heart is most trying.

After the rugs and clothes are taken off, the man should be quickly dried, and then have a warm bath, after which he may have a cold douche if his liver be in good order. He should not dress until he is thoroughly cool, and

ought to forbear taking anything to drink as long as he possibly can after a sweat ; for the more heated the body is, the more rapidly will it absorb fluid.

In India and in other hot climates, a man cannot walk in clothing much more than half the distance he could accomplish in England, under similar circumstances.

If a man has hacks to ride, and is unable to walk, he can take a sweat on horseback by putting on clothes as described, and then going for a sharp ride ; but this, though pleasanter, will not be as effective practice as walking.

A sweat, like that I have described, will take from four pounds to six pounds off an ordinary man, provided that there be little or no wind, which most materially prevents perspiration. When taking a sweat in hot climates, one should avoid the sun as much as possible ; for few things tend to make one so nervous, as hard exercise when exposed to its influence. Having one's nerves in good order is of far more consequence than being able to get the exact weight. This particularly applies to men who ride their own horses ; for jockeys have little option in the matter, owners being often foolishly exacting on this point. I am quite certain that, on the flat, a jockey can ride quite five pounds better when he is fit and well, than he

can when he is weak from wasting. In steeplechasing, the difference is one of stones and not of pounds.

A lamp bath is often taken instead of a regular sweat, if the man in training be lazy, or not able to walk well. It is arranged thus : a lamp for the purpose, or three or four small saucers full of oil with lighted cotton wicks in them, are placed under a chair on which the man sits. It is well to have the seat of the chair made of wood and its under surface covered with zinc, or tin, which will prevent it from being burned, and will also radiate the heat. He should have no clothes on, but should have several rugs and blankets wrapped round the chair and himself, and brought tight under it, so that the heated air may not escape. A waterproof sheet considerably assists this operation. A little practice is required to teach one how to get the rugs and blankets fixed. If the hot air be properly kept in, the person taking the bath will, in about ten minutes, break out into a profuse perspiration. He may continue in this state for an hour, which will be as long as most men can bear. A portable Turkish bath may be used.

A lamp bath will take little more than half the weight off that a regular sweat will do, for its action is confined to the pores of the skin alone ; but in the other, there is

a general waste of the body, the lungs aiding very largely in carrying off the *detritus*. When walking, waste of tissue rapidly takes place by reason of the blood-vessels of the lungs taking up an increased supply of oxygen, which is then carried through the system and is utilised for removing the carbon of the broken-up material in the form of carbonic acid, which is exhaled from the lungs into the atmosphere. By this process the blood is kept pure. Under the influence of a lamp bath, the action of the heart, after a short time, becomes tumultuous, and the breathing laboured, on account of the lungs becoming gorged with impure blood, till at last faintness and marked distress may ensue. By persisting in these sweats, the heart is very liable to become permanently injured.

I have described wasting and Banting from a jockey's point of view ; though I am well aware how injurious they are to health, which cannot be maintained, under ordinary conditions, without the consumption of a due proportion of fat or oil, and starch or sugar in the food, along with an adequate supply of fresh vegetables. I would strongly advise any of my readers who, being inclined to put up weight, may wish to keep it permanently down, on no account to Bant, but to take lots of hard exercise, and to substitute for the usual dinner a light meal consisting of a

little cold lean meat, and some plain vegetables. This, with an ordinary breakfast at about 10 A.M., and a cup of tea and a slice of toast first thing in the morning, will be enough for any healthy man to keep "fit" on. Beer, butter, stews, fat of all kinds, pastry and sweets should be avoided.

An effective method of keeping down weight, without undue curtailment of food and drink, is to abstain from all fluid during meals, for two hours after them, and for a short time, say, a quarter of an hour before them. The chief objections to this plan are that it is apt to make one constipated—a tendency which might be relieved by the eating of brown bread, raw fruit and vegetables—and to bring on rheumatism.

I have known some men keep down their weight by taking plenty of exercise, and by rigidly abstaining from drinking more than a pint to a pint and a half of fluid during the twenty-four hours.

I need hardly say, that any mode of wasting, however good, must prove injurious if carried to excess or continued for a long period. The quicker weight is got off, under judicious conditions, and the sooner the system is allowed to return to its natural healthy state, the less strain will it experience from wasting.

The more a man trusts to *hard exercise and self-denial*, the "fitter" will he be to ride. Banting, sweats, and physic should only be employed when time is limited, or the amount to be got off is considerable, and the notice very short.

A man in training should weigh himself every day to see how the process of wasting proceeds. A Salter's spring balance, noting half-pounds up to 200 pounds, is a cheap and portable machine for the purpose.

A man can ride in a light saddle (of two or two and a half pounds) about five pounds less than what he will weigh in ordinary clothes.

If a jockey be at all in hard condition, he need allow nothing for wasting during a race on a hot day ; for the horse will sweat as much into the saddle cloth or pannel, as the jockey is likely to lose.

The following is a safe rule to adopt for weighing out before a race. Everything, including the bridle, being in the scales, put half a pound on the opposite side, and if the jockey can draw his weight with this extra half-pound, he is quite safe.

Weighing before a race is called "weighing out" ; after a race it is termed "weighing in."

CHAPTER X.

BRIDLES AND SADDLES.

Principles of Bitting—Snaffles—Curb Bits—Bridle and Saddle Gear—
How to put on the Bridle and Saddle—Choice of a Bit.

Principles of Bitting.—The bridle is used for two objects: (1) to regulate the speed of the horse and to direct his movements; and (2) to enable him to carry his rider in the best possible manner.

The spinal column, from the head to the tail, accommodates itself to the movements of the limbs.

Were the rider to “sit like a dead weight,” with the reins loose, his body, being free from connection with the horse, and having its centre of gravity above the saddle, would be jerked to the rear at each forward impulse given by the animal’s hind legs; a proceeding which would materially interfere with the horse’s rate of progression. Even in the case of lead cloths placed in the most advantageous position, power is lost by the animal having at each stride to overcome, more or less, the *vis inertiae* of the dead weight.

The skilful rider who keeps a good hold of the reins will however, accommodate himself to the movements of his mount, so as to reduce the retarding influences of his presence in his saddle to a minimum. For, as a horse, when making his stroke, at the gallop, extends his head, the centre of gravity of the rider's body will, consequently, be slightly moved forward.

The two essentials, then, for good biting, are (1) that the horse should be under control ; and (2) that he should "go up to his bridle"—in other words, that he should allow the bit to press on his mouth without flinching from it, though he should obey the pressure according as the rider varies it. If, on the contrary, the horse be afraid to "face the bit," the rider will be unable to "catch hold of his head," and to accommodate himself to the movements of his mount ; while the animal will be afraid to extend its head and neck, and will, consequently, check the backward sweep of its hind quarters. From the bent position of the neck, the fore legs, however, will have the utmost freedom. The consequence of this constrained carriage of the body will be, that the horse will keep his hind legs too much under him, and will raise his fore legs too high ; in fact, he will be "over-collected." Fashionable harness-horses, which are driven with severe bits that they are afraid to

“go up to,” and whose heads are drawn back by gag-bearing-reins, furnish us with an excellent instance of this “over collection.” Being well on their haunches, they bend their knees and lift their fore legs in the most approved manner. The better they “stand” being “hit and held,” the loftier their action, and, consequently, the higher their price. This style may be very suitable for a three or four mile drive in the park or in town, during the season; but it is not “business” from a horseman’s point of view, as it entails a waste of muscular power. We may see a similar needless expenditure of force, in the case of a riding-horse which will not face his bit, especially, if the man on his back ‘endeavours to keep him “up to it,” by the pressure of his legs, or by the aid of his spurs. It is quite right that a trooper who may be called upon to engage an adversary on horseback, with sword or lance, should be able to collect his charger, so as to make him turn, “circle,” or “change,” with the utmost quickness and precision, by the mere indication of the bridle hand. We, however, who desire to ride like “workmen,” should never use any bit which our horses will not face.

With respect to driving, I may mention in passing, that the high action we may see among fashionable carriage-horses is, in the majority of cases, altogether false; for the

lofty style is almost entirely confined to the fore legs. The action in trotting, to be true, should be shared in by the hind limbs, as well as by the fore. To my thinking, nothing looks worse than to see a horse trying to "pick his teeth" with his knees, and, at the same time, dragging his hind feet behind him.

In order that the horse may go up to his bit, its pressure must be applied in a direction opposite to that in which his head is directed, as with the ordinary snaffle. If the horse be hurt by a tight curb chain pressing on a sensitive part of his lower jaw, or by a high port bearing against his palate, he may be cowed into submission; but he will not catch hold of his bit.

We shall now consider the construction and adjustment of bits which horses will go up to. We need not trouble ourselves by trying to devise any special means of restraint for pullers; for the ordinary snaffle or curb, properly made and properly put on, is sufficient to control almost any horse, provided a good rider has hold of the reins. If a horse pulls beyond control, he should, instead of being ridden, be put aside to be properly broken. Although a fine horseman may be able to steer his mount in fair form with a severe bit, the inexperienced rider will fare infinitely worse with it, on a difficult horse, than he

would do, were the bit an easy one to the animal's mouth.

Snaffles.—*The action of the snaffle* is to restrain the horse by pressure on his tongue, *bars* of his mouth (the part of his gums which are bare of teeth between the tushes and grinders), and the corners of his mouth. Owing to the snaffle being jointed, the tongue receives but little pressure. When the horse carries his head in a more or less perpendicular manner, the bars offer the chief resistance; but when he extends his head, whether he raises or lowers it, the pressure falls on the corners of the mouth, and, possibly, in part, on the first back teeth. When a snaffle is smooth and sufficiently large, it fulfils with all ordinary horses, every condition, from a "workman's" point of view, required in a perfect bit. If the horse be a hard puller, a severe snaffle may be employed. This, however, is not generally advisable; for the greater number of pullers that would resent, by going all the faster, the punishment inflicted by a thin or twisted snaffle, would obey the forcible indication afforded by a large, smooth mouthpiece which did not pain them. As a horse is far stronger than his rider, we must rely on easily understood indications, rather than on brute force to control him.

The *bars* appear to be the most sensitive part on which

the snaffle acts. To save them, pullers will open their mouths and throw up their heads, or poke out their noses so as to get the pressure on the corners of their mouths. We know that a snaffle acts to the greatest advantage when the horse carries his head perpendicularly to the ground, and when the rider keeps his hands low, or uses a martingale at such a length that it will have the same result. The effect of a snaffle is at a minimum when the rider holds his hands high, and when the horse, as a runaway will sometimes do, catches it between his teeth. Against this trick, twisted, double-mouthed snaffles, or a snaffle with a curb chain or twine twisted round it, may be used. We often find a tight noseband to be serviceable in restraining a puller; for with it on, the animal cannot shift the snaffle on to the corners of his mouth. The pressure will then fall on the first back teeth and on the bars just in front of them.

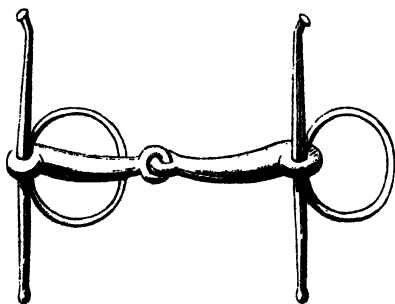
I must confess that I cannot say with certainty that a horse ever "takes the bit between his teeth," to use a common expression. The results of my own experience make me incline to the opinion that a pulling horse never catches hold of the mouthpiece of a snaffle with his teeth, in order, the more effectively, to overcome the efforts of the rider to control him. He may possibly, at times, after

closing his mouth, bear against the mouthpiece with the front part of his first back teeth.

There is a great deal of truth in the old saying that if a horse cannot be held with a snaffle, no other bit will hold him.

In turning the horse, the snaffle bridle acts by the *horn* (cheekpiece) of the bit pressing against the side of the

Fig. 37.



mouth, and also by the *headstall* (the leather-work, by which the bit is attached to the head) pulling the head round.

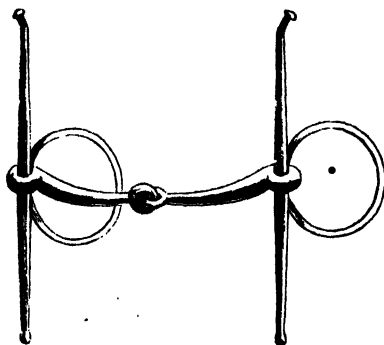
• The following are the chief varieties of snaffles :

1st. The *plain smooth snaffle* (see Fig. 37). This is by far the best for general use.

2nd. The *twisted snaffle*. I do not at all fancy this bit. If severity be required, I think a chain snaffle is preferable to it in every way.

3rd. The *thin racing snaffle* (see Fig. 38), either twisted or smooth. I cannot understand why this variety was ever invented, unless it was for the object of saving two or three ounces of weight. I have always found that it has a great tendency to make horses pull. The racing snaffles of the present day are not nearly so thin as those which were formerly used.

Fig. 38.

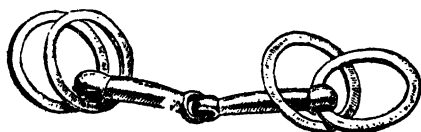


4th. The *chain snaffle*, in which the mouthpiece consists of a chain of several links. This is an admirable bit for horses which require some "holding," and may be made easy or severe to the mouth as the rider chooses. To increase its severity, the chain may be untwisted before being put into the horse's mouth. For tender mouthed horses, the chain may be covered with three or four turns

of wash-leather sewn on to it. Two chains, one above the other, are sometimes used instead of one.

5th. The *double-ringed snaffle* (see Fig. 39) is similar to the ordinary bridoon of a double bridle, except that two rings are placed on the mouthpiece, inside those to which the reins are connected, for attachment to the headstall of the bridle. It is in very common use among harness horses. The drivers who employ it, generally, buckle the reins to both rings at each side, and thus convert it into an ordinary

Fig. 39.

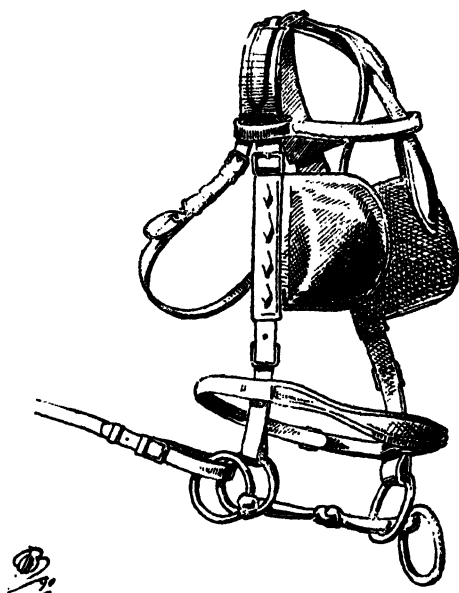


snaffle (see Fig. 40). For saddle work, the rings of the mouthpiece to which the reins are fixed, may be provided with horns like those of an ordinary snaffle (see Fig. 41). This is by far the best kind of snaffle for turning a horse ; for the pull of either rein falls directly on the opposite side of the horse's mouth, without being taken by the headstall. A moderately tight noseband, by closing the mouth and thus causing the horns of the snaffle to act, to greater advantage, against the side of the jaw opposite to which either rein is pulled, will materially increase the turning effect of

this bit. The native polo players of Munipur, in which country, polo has been the national game for centuries, all use the double-ringed snaffle with their clever ponies.

This bit should not be employed by riders who have

Fig. 40.

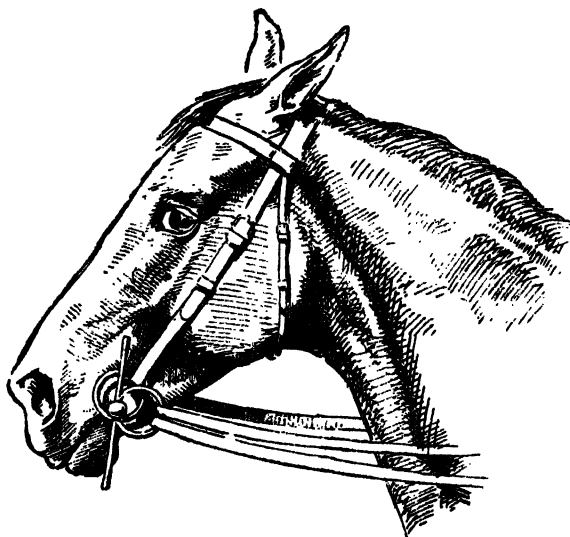


“bad hands,” as it may be rendered very painful if pulled about in the horse’s mouth.

6th. The *gag snaffle* is used with two reins, one being attached in the ordinary manner, while the other is a

continuation of a separate headstall, the cheekpieces of which are rounded, and pass freely downwards through holes in the rings of the snaffle—instead of being buckled or sewn on to them—and from thence to the rider's hands. When the gag reins are pulled, the bit is forced against the

Fig. 41.

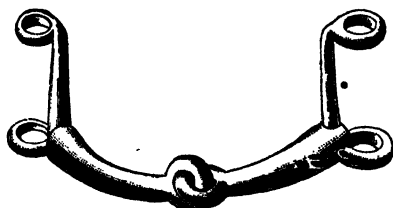


corners of the horse's mouth, which makes him draw up his head. This bit is consequently very useful with horses that "bore" their heads down, and with buck-jumpers. It may be used as a bridoon to a double bridle (see Fig. 42).

7th. The *double-mouthed snaffle* (Fig. 43) has two

mouthpieces which respectively have joints placed more to one side than to the other, so that, if the joint of the upper mouthpiece be more to the near side than to the off, that of the lower one will be more to the off than to the near, and *vice versa*. It forms a very severe bit, as it presses directly on the gums, and the horse cannot catch it between his teeth. It should not be used with a tight noseband; for opening out somewhat in the form of a W when the reins are drawn tight, it will then be apt to hurt the roof of the mouth.

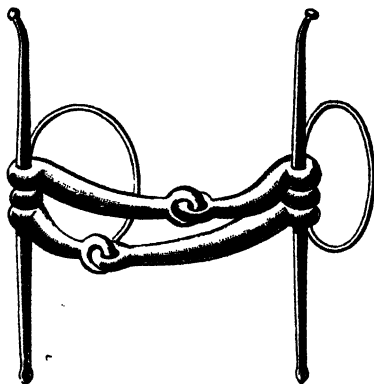
Fig. 42.



8th. The *Newmarket snaffle* has attached to its rings a noseband whose length can be altered, so as to divide the pressure derived from the pull of the reins, between the nose and the lower jaw, or to throw it exclusively on one or on the other. There are side straps attached to the headstall of the bridle, which prevent the noseband from falling too low down. It forms a very nice bit for a horse with a tender mouth.

Or, it is a double-ringed snaffle, which has attached to its inner rings a noseband, that is kept in position by pieces of leather sewn round the rings, and under the check ends.

Fig. 43.



When one pair of reins is taken up, its action is that of an ordinary double-ringed snaffle ; but the other, when drawn tight, causes all the pressure to fall on the horse's

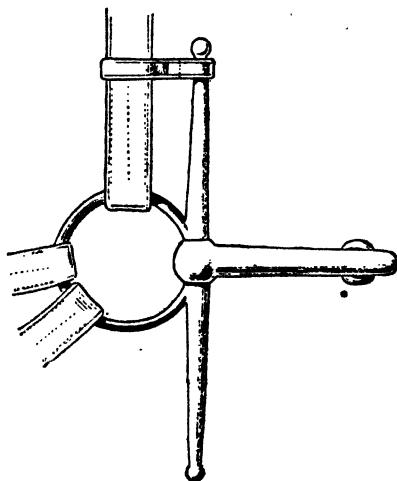
Fig. 44.



nose. It then forms an effectual check to a hard puller or bolter ; probably, more by affording a plain indication of the rider's wishes than by undue severity.

The *india-rubber bit*, which is a snaffle with its mouth-piece covered with hardened india-rubber, is sometimes useful for holding a hard puller. Before employing one of these bits for the first time, its strength should be well

Fig. 45.



tested ; for the chain over which the rubber is placed and which is hidden from view, may be defective.

The *sawmouth bridoon* (see Fig. 44) may be attached to a snaffle in the event of the horse pulling very hard. It is extremely severe.

The upper horns of a snaffle are usually attached to the

cheek pieces of the bridle, by a small strap, in order to keep the mouthpiece level (see Fig. 45).

The *Tattersall's leading bit*, which has a circular mouthpiece may be added to the foregoing list. It is an excellent bit for leading horses, as it exerts an equal pressure on both sides of the mouth, in whichever direction the leading rein be pulled.

Running reins consist of a single long rein, which passes through the rings of the snaffle, and buckles on to the Ds or staples in front of the saddle. This arrangement keeps the horse's head down, and nearly doubles the power of the rider.

Curb Bits.

In Fig. 46 we have a back and side view of a curb bit, drawn to a quarter full size.

The names of the different parts of the curb are as follows :

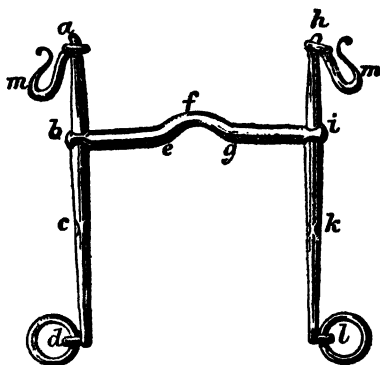
<i>a d</i> and <i>h l</i> . . .	Cheeks of bit.
<i>a b</i> and <i>h i</i> . . .	Upper arms of cheeks of bit.
<i>b d</i> and <i>i l</i> . . .	Lower „ „ „
<i>b i</i>	Mouthpiece.
<i>e f g</i>	Port.
<i>b e</i> and <i>g i</i> . . .	Cannous.
<i>c</i> and <i>k</i>	Lipstrap rings.

Curbs are bits in which the principle of the lever is utilised

for affording the rider a certain amount of mechanical advantage in restraining the horse. I may mention that the curb acts as a lever of the second order.

I may remark that the term *bit* is very often restricted to curbs. I have, however, in the following pages, used it, for convenience sake, as a general term for either curb

Fig. 46.



or snaffle. A *double bridle* is the expression used to signify one which has both a curb and a snaffle. It is also called a *bit and bridoon*.

The rings of the upper arms of the cheeks of the bit are attached to the cheekpieces of the *headstall*, which is the term applied to the leather part of the bridle that goes on the horse's head.

The *curbchain* lies under the lower jaw, and is attached to the upper rings of the bit.

The *lipstrap*, which passes through a ring placed for that purpose on the curbchain, serves to prevent the curbchain from shifting upwards, and also keeps the cheeks of the bit from swinging forward and becoming reversed. It also helps to prevent a tricky horse from catching the cheekpiece of the bit with his lower lip, or with his teeth.

The depression in the lower jaw, in which the curbchain should rest, is called the *chin groove*.

Action of the curb.—The following pressures are, when the reins of the curb are drawn tight, exerted in the manner shown by arrowheads in Fig. 47 :

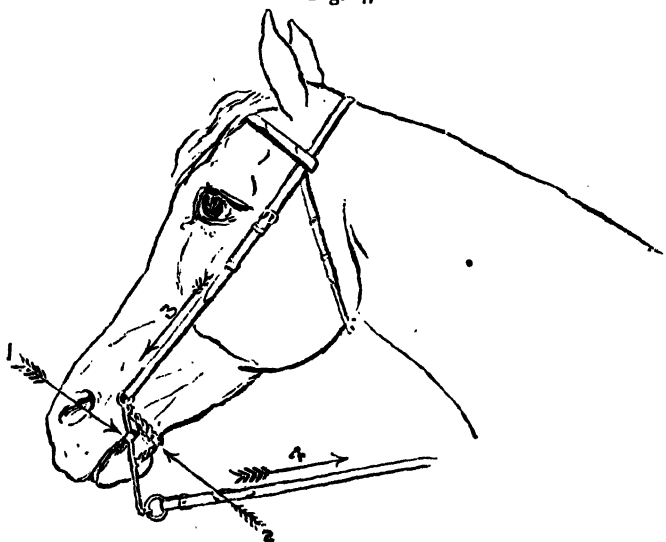
- (1) By the mouthpiece on the bars of the lower jaw, and on the tongue.
- (2) On the chin groove.
- (3) On the poll of the horse's head, over which the headstall passes.
- (4) The pull of the reins.

If we refer to page 183, we shall see that the pressure of the mouthpiece (1) is the only really legitimate one for restraining the horse.

The pressure of the curbchain (2) on the chin groove should be rendered as little irksome to the animal as

possible ; for any pain it may inflict on him will be in the direction in which he is going, and hence will only restrain him by making him afraid to go up to his bit. It will, also, have the natural tendency to cause him to throw up his head in the endeavour to save his jaw from injury. That

Fig. 47.



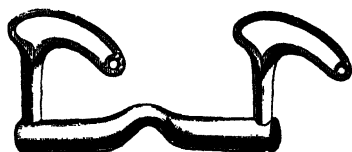
curbchains hurt horses, in the manner described, is patent to any one who may have seen how fretful and unmanageable curb bits render many high-spirited animals that will go quietly in a plain snaffle. They "chuck up their heads" in the endeavour to save the lower jaw from the painful

pressure of the curbchain : in fact, we may frequently find the part against which it bears, to be galled and bruised. Not uncommonly, in old standing cases, a bony deposit is formed on the lower jaw, as a result of continued inflammation. Even if we succeed in getting the animal under control, by inflicting pain on him with the curbchain, we shall do so by "cowing" him ; in other words, we make him afraid to "go up to his bit," and shall, consequently, render him neither safe nor efficient to ride. The habits of "chucking up the head," and not going up to the bit, so seriously interfere with the comfort and safety of the rider, and with the usefulness of the animal, that it behoves every owner to avoid, by attending to the proper biting of his horses, the possibility of their contracting these vices.

The downward pull on the headstall (3) should be obviated as much as it is in our power to do ; because, by drawing the poll down, it interferes with the free action of the horse's head and neck, and, consequently, with the movements of his limbs. In practice, we find that the employment of a curb has a tendency to make a horse gallop "round," in other words to bend his knees too much. Although this may be disregarded, when perfect control, rather than speed, is demanded ; it has served to virtually banish curb bits from racing stables.

In the Chifney bit (see Fig. 54), the downward pull on the headstall is altogether done away with. To obviate this undesirable pull, Lord Thurlow invented a bit (see Fig. 48), which differs from the ordinary one by having the eyes of the upper arms of the cheeks made oval-shaped to the rear.

Fig. 48.



If we examine the under surface of the lower jaw, we shall find that the bone at the chin-groove (see Fig. 47) is smooth and rounded ; and that, immediately above it, the edges of the branches of the jaw are sharp and sensitive. Hence we may conclude that the curbchain should remain stationary in this groove ; as it is the only convenient spot on which the chain can press without paining the horse.

I am indebted to Major Dwyer (*Seats and Saddles*) for the knowledge of the principle that "the curbchain must lie in the chin-groove, without any tendency to mount up out of it on to the sharp bones of the lower jaw."

As the bars are more sensitive than the tongue, the *port* (see Fig. 46), has been devised, to throw more pressure on the former than on the latter, in order to increase the severity of the bit.

Principles to be observed in the construction and adjustment of curbs.—(1.) The longer the upper arms of the cheeks of the bit (see Fig. 46) are, the greater will be the downward pull on the headstall of the bridle, and the more tendency will the curbchain have to mount up on the sharp and sensitive edges of the branches of the jaw. If, however, the upper arms be too short, they will allow the cheeks of the bit to come in a line with the reins, when the horse pulls, and, consequently, will do away with all the mechanical advantage to be derived from the employment of a curb. I have found that, for ordinary horses, it is advisable to fix this length, measuring from the lower edge of the mouthpiece (on which the upper arms of the cheek revolve) to the upper ring of the cheek, at one and a half inch (see Fig. 49). The measurement is usually taken from the centre of the mouthpiece, a plan which does not

allow for the thickness of this steel bar. It is evident, however, that the thicker the mouthpiece, the longer does the upper arm virtually become.

(2.) Having now fixed the length of the upper arm of the cheek, we may, to obtain increased power, lengthen the lower arm, as we may find convenient, say, to four and a half inches.

(3.) The width of the mouthpiece should accurately correspond with that of the horse's mouth, so that it may not pinch the lips by being too tight, nor be liable to slip from side to side by being too loose. In the latter case, the horse is apt to acquire the habit of "boring" to one side, by getting one of the cheeks of the bit close up against the side of his mouth, which will cause the port to become shifted over to the other side. He will then, owing to the absence of the port, be able to relieve the gum from pressure on the side to which he bores, by interposing his tongue between it and the mouthpiece. When the mouthpiece fits accurately, the port will remain in the centre of the mouth, so that there will be an "even feeling" on both sides.

This rule as to the width of the mouthpiece does not always hold good; for some horses, which bore and pull badly, will go best in a bit, the mouthpiece of which is

broad, so as to allow the rider to pull it from side to side in the animal's mouth, as occasion may require.

(4) If we wish to render the bit less severe, we may lower the port, so as to allow the tongue to take some of the pressure. The port should on no account be more than one and a quarter inch high, lest it might hurt the horse by pressing against his palate—a form of punishment which, I need hardly point out, is opposed to the very first principles of good biting.

(5.) The mouthpiece should be placed low down in the mouth, so that the curbchain may not have any tendency to slip upwards out of the chin groove, and that the downward pull on the headstall may be obviated as much as possible.

(6.) The curbchain should be sufficiently loose to allow a certain amount of "play."

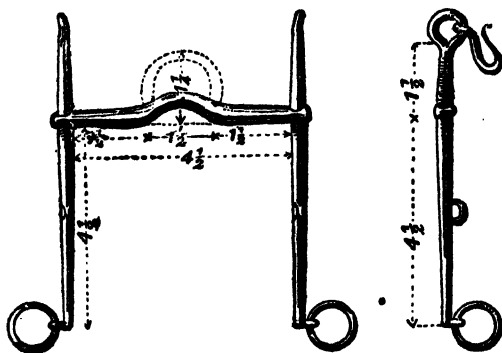
Agreeably to the foregoing principles, I have drawn on the next page a sketch of a curb bit for a horse with an ordinary-sized mouth (see Fig. 49).

The measurements are given in inches. The maximum height of the port is shown by dotted lines.

Keeping in view the principle that the *curbchain* should on no account hurt the horse's chin, we should select one which will lie flat and smooth, in preference to one with large and few links. The chain may be covered with

leather, or there may be a leather strap placed between it and the horse's jaw. Instead of a curbchain, a flat piece of bridle leather, furnished with a few links at each end, may be used. "It is very clear that the narrower the

Fig. 49.



(Drawn to $\frac{1}{4}$ full size.)

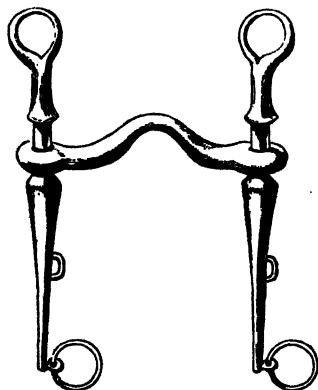
	Inches.
Width of mouthpiece	$4\frac{1}{2}$ to $4\frac{3}{4}$
Height of port not to exceed [Dwyer]	$1\frac{1}{4}$
Width of port	$1\frac{1}{2}$
Length of upper arm of check, measured from lower part of mouthpiece to ring	$1\frac{1}{2}$
Length of lower arm of check, about.	$4\frac{1}{2}$

chain is made, the more likely is it to cause pain, which is just what we want to avoid, and we should therefore endeavour to make it as broad as possible. The vulgar notion of a sharp curb, is, as the reader perceives, a

monstrous absurdity" (*Major Dwyer*). The curbchain should not be too broad; for it would, then, be liable to hurt the sharp edges of the branches of the lower jaw.

The curb bit which has a *sliding mouthpiece* (see Fig. 50) appears to me to be wrong in principle; for, if placed so as to have a right position when the reins are drawn tight, the mouthpiece will knock against the tushes when the reins

Fig. 50.



are slackened. The horse will continually play with this sliding mouthpiece when the snaffle only is used, or when both reins are loose: hence, in these cases, its presence seems to keep the mouth "lively." But when the curb reins are taken up, the mouthpiece will act the same as that of any other curb, and will have no up-and-down play whatsoever. This bit, nevertheless, suits many horses

better than the ordinary made curb—seemingly, from the fact that the upper arms of the cheekpieces are generally much shorter, and, consequently, more correct in length than those of the other, whose upper arms—measured from the lower part of the mouthpiece to the rings—are, usually, quite two and a quarter inches long. It cannot be placed sufficiently low in the mouth, without interfering with the

Fig. 51.



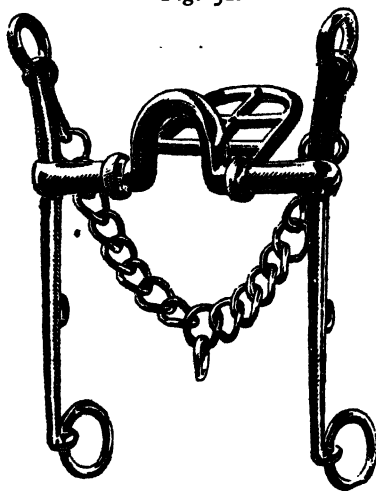
tushes. It might do with mares; although, if placed low enough, it would look bad.

Mr. J. H. Moore recommends that, in a curb, the rings should be placed at right angles to their usual position (see Fig. 51); so that, if a martingale be used, its rings may not catch on those of the bit.

The gridiron bit (see Fig. 52) is specially devised to prevent horses which have that trick, from getting their

tongues over the port. The "gridiron," which is meant to lie on the tongue, revolves on the mouthpiece, and has a catch on it that prevents it from going further than just above the port. I have never used one of these bits ; though good judges have told me that they are very effective for the purpose for which they are intended.

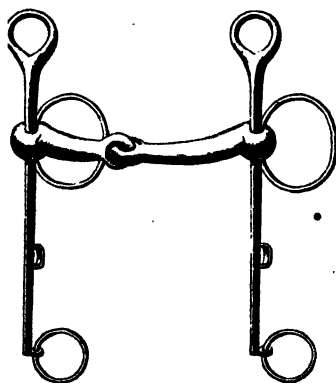
Fig. 52.



Pelhams.—The Pelham is a combination in various forms of the curb and snaffle. Its action, when it has a jointed mouthpiece (see Fig. 53), is faulty ; for, when the curb reins are drawn tight, the cheeks of the bit jam against the sides of the mouth, on account of the presence of the joint which

is at the centre of the mouthpiece, whose width, instead of corresponding with that of the horse's mouth, varies at every touch of the rider's hands on the reins. With a straight bar mouthpiece it rests chiefly on the tongue, and is then a very easy bit ; but with a port and unjointed mouthpiece the Pelham will act as an ordinary curb. The

Fig. 53.

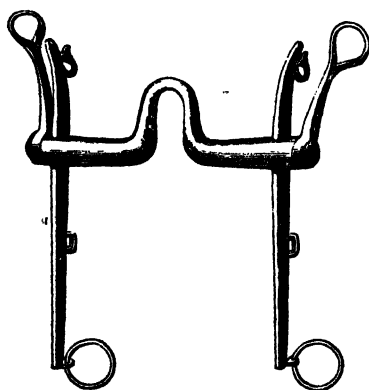


Hanoverian Pelham is a powerful form of bit. It has a jointed port attached to short "cannons," on which are fixed rollers that rest on the bars of the horse's mouth. Many persons consider it very effective with a puller, and that, for park hacking, or for showing off a horse's paces, it is one of the best bits in light hands.

Pelhams have a marked tendency to make horses carry

their heads too low, by reason of the strong downward pull they exert on the headstall of the bridle to which they are attached. This appears to be owing to the presence of the joint in the centre of the mouthpiece, and to the fact that the upper arms of the cheeks are generally far too long. With some riders, this tendency may be partly due

Fig. 54.



to the habit they have of riding on both reins, which, with the Pelham, on account of the action of the snaffle reins, causes the mouthpiece to be drawn up towards the corners of the mouth. The pull of the reins will, then, be taken to a certain extent by the headstall.

Pelhams may be used with "stargazers," or with horses which throw their heads up; supposing that, for fashion's

sake, a curb of some sort must be employed in preference to a snaffle.

The Chifney bit.—The celebrated Sam Chifney, who fell into disgrace with the racing public, on account of having been suspected of intentionally losing a race at Newmarket on the 20th October, 1791, when riding the then Prince of Wales's horse, Escape, invented this form of curb (Fig. 54), in which the objectionable downward pull on the headstall is entirely dispensed with; for its headstall is attached to short arms, that revolve on the mouthpiece, independently of the cheeks of the bit, to which the curb-chain is hooked.

The Chifney bit is very severe, and is inapplicable to most horses that are ridden by men with indifferent hands; for its curbchain alone resists the forward action of the upper arms of the cheeks of the bit. Thus, the whole of the pressure falls on the gums, tongue and under part of the lower jaw, and none of it is taken, as with the ordinary curb, by the animal's poll, which, I need hardly say, is not as sensitive as the parts just named.

Bridle and Saddle Gear.

The names of the different parts of a bridle are as follows :

The *crownpiece*, which passes over the horse's poll.

The *cheekpieces*, which connect the crownpiece with the bit.

The *throat latch* (usually pronounced "throat lash"), which is a part of the crownpiece, and serves to prevent the bridle from slipping over the horse's head by passing under his throat.

The *forehead band*, *browband*, or *front*, which goes across the horse's forehead.

The *headstall*, is the name given to the foregoing leather work, when in a collected form, and to which is attached the *snaffle*, the *bit and bridoon*, the *Chifney bit*, or the *Pelham*.

The *lipstrap* serves to keep the curbchain in its place.

The *reins* are connected to the rings of the curb or snaffle.

The *billets* are the ends of the reins, or of the cheekpieces of the bridle, which buckle on to the bit.

• *Loops* or *keepers* serve, when buckles are used, to retain the ends of the billets.

Stops are used with reins which have buckles, to prevent the martingale rings catching on the buckles.

A *bridoon head* is the headstall of the snaffle of a double bridle. It has neither throat latch nor forehead band.

Headstalls.—It is considered to be “the thing” to have the headstall sewn, and not buckled, on to the bit. This plan undoubtedly looks far neater than the other, although it is somewhat inconvenient to the groom when he wants to clean the bridle. Besides this, it does not admit of the bit being readily changed. These objections can, of course, have no weight with a man who has as many different bridles and bits as he may choose to use ; but they are most valid ones to a horse owner who is obliged to study usefulness rather than show, or who may not have a saddler’s shop at hand, from which to procure, at a moment’s notice, whatever gear he may require. If he had a spare easy curb bit, and wanted to put it on instead of a severe one, which was already attached to the bridle, or if he wished to use a chain snaffle, instead of a plain smooth one, it would be most inconvenient, if he had no other headstall, to be obliged to have the stitches ripped up, and the headstall sewn on afresh. For country or colonial work, we may often want to use the headstall of a snaffle for a double bridle, and *vice versa*.

Double buckles on a bridle are the most useful kind, as they do away with the necessity of having “loops” for the “billets.” They do not, however, look as neat as single buckles.

The headstall of the curb bit may be attached by means of plated "spring billets," which look neat, can be detached in an instant, and will allow greater freedom to the forward action of the cheek of the bit, than it would have were it connected by leather.

Forehead Bands, Browbands, or Fronts, are generally made of plain leather, though some people consider a covering of silk ribbon, or patent coloured leather, a relief. The browband of a racing bridle may, appropriately, be of the owner's colours.

The Throat Latch should buckle on the near side ; but may also do so on the off side.

A Lipstrap should always be used with a curb ; for in its absence, a horse may, at any moment, when galloping throw his head up, and reverse the position of the cheeks of the bit, thus depriving the rider of proper control over him. If, however, when he brings his head down again, the rider, at the same time, slackens the reins, the cheeks of the bit will fall back into their usual position. Besides this, some horses have a trick of catching the cheek of the bit, on one side, with their lip, and then boring down to that side ; a practice which the presence of the lipstrap will prevent. Lipstraps are generally made of leather and provided with a buckle. They sometimes consist of a

light steel chain which has "spring hooks" at each end, which is an arrangement I like, as it is simple and convenient ; although some consider it fit only for a lady's horse. This practical consideration, when no saddler's shop is at hand, especially abroad, and when there are a lot of horses to ride or break, may well outweigh the trifling one of whether or not the attachment of the headstall and reins is effected according to the dictates of fashion. As these pages are devoted to points of riding which hold good for all time, I do not concern myself about the millinery aspect of the subject. Besides the convenience of the buckle method with respect to the facility it offers for changing headstall and reins, it permits the bits being much more readily cleaned, than when they are fixtures to the leather work.

Reins.—Having reins thick, thin, broad, or narrow, is a point which the rider should decide for himself. Almost all good horsemen like them to be pliable, and moderately thin and broad. I may mention that the degree of thickness of reins or stirrups is not always a safe criterion of their strength ; for thickness of the leather may merely indicate that it has not been pressed, which is a process applied to the leather work of bridles and saddles turned out by all good saddlers. Inferior

leather may often be recognised by its thickness and porous character.

The only real advantage of having the reins sewn instead of buckled on to the bit, is that it dispenses with the necessity of having "stops" on the reins which pass through the rings of the martingale. Though it looks better, it may prove inconvenient, as I have previously remarked.

With a double bridle, I prefer having both reins of equal breadth, instead of having the curb rein narrow, and the snaffle rein broad, as is frequently the practice. The buckle at the centre of the one which passes through the rings of the martingale, will serve to distinguish it from the other. The "feeling" in the hands with reins of equal substance, is far more pleasant than when they are of different sizes. When the reins are held according to a uniform method, there will not be the slightest possibility of the rider becoming confused as to their respective identity.

If the reins which pass through the rings of the martingale be not sewn on to the snaffle, they should be provided with "stops," so as to prevent the martingale rings from being caught on the buckles. If a running martingale be employed on the curb reins, and the rings of the

cheeks of the bit be not placed as shown in Fig. 51, "stops" should be used, whether the reins are buckled or sewn on ; for, without them, the rings of the martingale will be liable to catch on those of the bit, and a serious accident might thereby occur.

Nosebands.—An ordinary noseband, buckled tight, will considerably increase the power of either curb or snaffle. When the horse is turned to the right or to the left, it allows the horns of the snaffle, on the side from which he is turned, to act in the most advantageous manner against the side of his upper and lower jaws. It also causes him to bring his head lower and bend his neck more than he would do without it ; because it deprives him of the power of yielding with the lower jaw only. With the curb, it prevents him from shifting the bit about in his mouth ; and also, when he is being turned, it increases the power of the rider in pulling his head round, as it fixes his upper and lower jaws together, and thus deprives him of the side "play" of the lower jaw on which the curb bears. Major Dwyer remarks, that it prevents the horse catching the bit with his back teeth.

The *cavasson noseband* is the neatest and most useful kind. It may either have a separate headpiece, similar to the "bridoon head" of a double bridle, or have cheek-

pieces which fasten on to the buckles to which the crown-piece of the bridle is attached. It can then be raised or lowered as required, and may be used with either snaffle or curb. A noseband should not be attached to the headstall of a curb, as it might then interfere with the action of that bit.

A *Bucephalus noseband* is merely an arrangement for tightening and loosening a noseband whose ends pass round the lower jaw and buckle on to the upper rings of the cheeks of the curb. This arrangement is a very effective means of control for many hard pullers.

In order to increase the severity of the noseband with a standing martingale, a flat piece of flexible steel, or a curb-chain may be sewn up inside the front part of the noseband. This arrangement might be useful with a determined rearer. I mention it merely in passing. Personally, I would never use the standing martingale attached to a noseband; for I have always found it act much better when fixed to the rings of the snaffle.

A noseband may be used with advantage to take off from the plainness of a horse's head.

Blackwell's nose net seems for training purposes to be a good substitute for a tight noseband. It consists of an ordinary bag-net just large enough to encircle the muzzle

of the horse and to buckle on to the noseband. Its meshes are about half an inch in diameter. It is tightened by a running string. The effect of this net is to make the animal keep his mouth shut, and consequently to prevent him "yawing about" and pulling. Those who have used it tell me that, although it acts well at first, a horse soon learns to disregard its controlling influence.

Martingales.—The uses of the *running martingale* are : (1) to aid the hands and arms in keeping the horse's head down ; (2) to increase the power of the rider in holding his head straight ; (3) to retain the reins in their place, and to prevent either of them from getting over the neck. With the first object in view the martingale may be adjusted so as to allow the direction of the pull of the reins to be in a line with the top of the withers. With horses which keep their heads sufficiently low, the martingale should be somewhat longer, so that it may not cramp the action of the head in any way. A rider, by an extra expenditure of strength, may keep his hands low enough to be able to dispense with a martingale for holding the horse's head down ; but do what he chooses, he will not have the same power to keep him straight as he would have with one on. Of course I am referring to free, "flippant" goers and not to "slugs."

I strongly advocate the use of the running martingale.

Martingales for yearlings are frequently provided, at Newmarket, with a long triangular piece of leather which connects the side-pieces together, so that the young one cannot catch his head in them. The apex of the triangle of course points down, while the base, which is about six inches broad, reaches to within a few inches of the animal's jaw. They are called "web martingales."

A not very efficient substitute for the martingale may be improvised by passing the reins under the horse's neck through a single ring, or through two rings attached together by a strap. This arrangement is sometimes called an *Irish martingale*, or *spectacles*. A correspondent informs me that he has found it very useful with a horse which had the habit of "chucking up his head," and getting the reins over his ears. He passed both bit and bridoon reins through the rings and thus prevented the animal from getting either rein over its head.

Its disadvantage is that when it is employed, the horse cannot be as readily turned to the right or to the left, as when the running martingale is used ; because the lateral pull of either rein will not be in a straight line, unless, indeed, the other one be let go altogether ; an action which would be utterly opposed to good horsemanship.

The *standing martingale* is attached to the noseband ; or its billets at each side may be fixed to the snaffle rings. The latter form is a very useful preventative of rearing and should be employed in preference to the other ; because it teaches a horse to save his mouth by bending his neck. The standing martingale should, as a rule, be used only with horses that require some such restraint to prevent them from stargazing, "chucking up" their heads, rearing, or for feats of *manège* riding. Its use, within proper limits, for keeping a horse's head down can in no way be dangerous, even when "crossing a country ;" for such a horse is certainly safer when he is compelled to look where he is going, than when he is allowed to stare straight up into the sky. This form of the martingale, with a troublesome horse that requires its employment, relieves the rider's hands and arms of a great deal of disagreeable exertion.

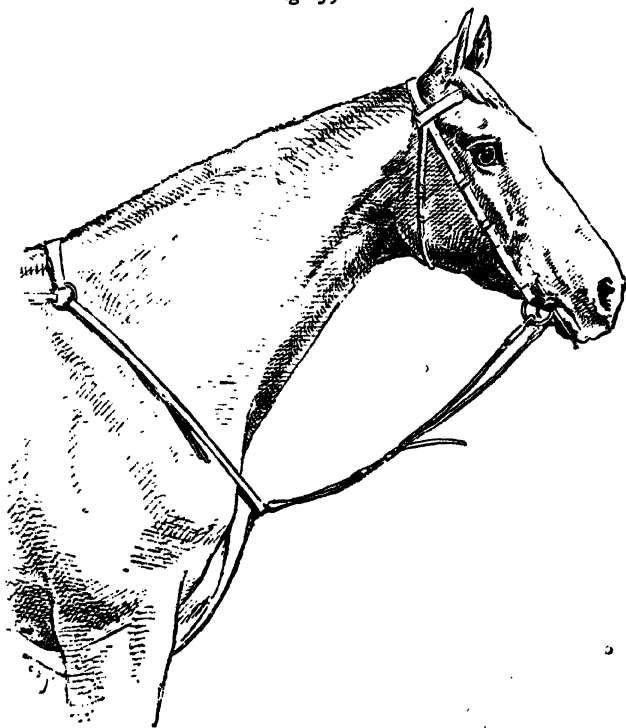
Mr. John Hubert Moore, than whom Ireland never had a better "maker" of steeplechase horses, is a very warm advocate for the use of the standing martingale for cross-country purposes. The once well-known chaser, Scots Grey, gained his principal victories when ridden in this gear, without the aid of which it was almost impossible to keep him straight. Although I see little or no danger

(certainly not a tithe of the risk incurred in riding at fences on a horse that is likely to refuse, or cannot be steadied without a standing martingale) in using it, properly put on, when going over a country ; still, on the principle of hampering an animal's movements, when jumping, with as little mechanical restraint as possible, I would recommend that this martingale should be employed for breaking and "making," rather than for chasing or hunting. The use of the standing martingale, attached to the rings of the snaffle, is to prevent the horse from getting the mouthpiece off the bars of the mouth, if he attempts to do so by raising his head. Therefore we should employ it lengthened out as much as we can, without allowing the animal the chance of shifting the mouthpiece from the bars on to the corners of the mouth.

Fond as I am of the standing martingale, I would advise that it should never be employed when going out for a ride on a horse that is wholly ignorant of its action ; for, if he jerks up his head, he may throw himself back on feeling the unaccustomed restraint. I once saw a lady, who is a fine rider, very nearly killed by this accident. The quickest, safest, and most efficacious way in which to teach a horse "to give and take" to the snaffle when it is connected to the standing martingale, is to put it on at the

proper length and then to give the animal a few minutes' circling, turning, and reining back with the long reins. When he does all this freely, while bending himself to

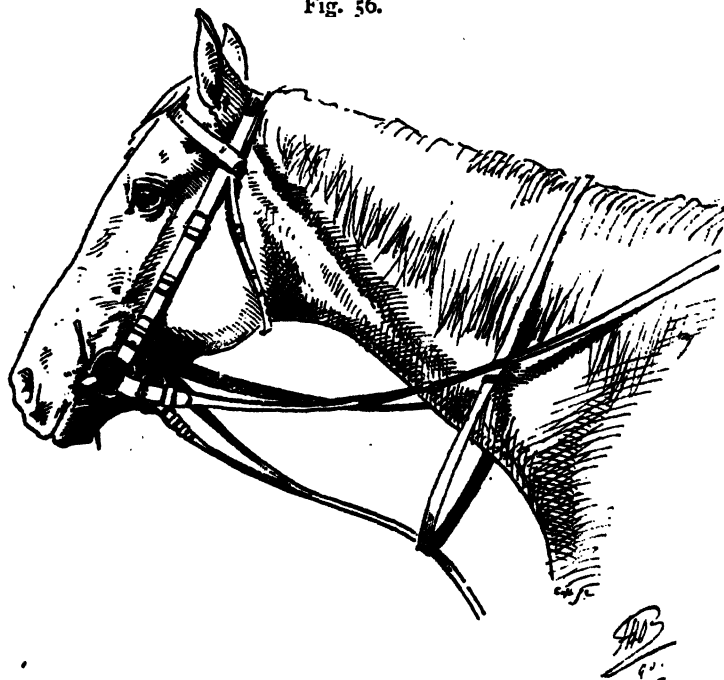
Fig. 55.



the rein, he may then be saddled and ridden in a standing martingale with safety. The use of the standing martingale is fully discussed in *Illustrated Horse Breaking*.

For park or ladies' hacks, this martingale may be employed to keep their heads down, so that they may not soil their riders' clothes with foam.

Fig. 56.



The Cheshire martingale is a handy form of standing martingale, which is attached to the rings of the snaffle and to the ring of the breastplate (see Fig. 55).

We may improvise a standing martingale by buckling

the rings of a running martingale to those of the snaffle, by means of the billets of the rein (see Fig. 56).

Saddles.—*The names of the different parts of a saddle are as follows :*

The part which goes over the withers is called the *pommel* or *head*, and the hind part of the saddle is termed the *cantle*. The *seat* is that portion of the saddle on which the rider sits. The *tree* comprises the wood and iron framework. The *gullet plate* is the iron arch under the pommel. The *points of the tree* are the wooden continuations of the gullet plate. The *bars of the tree* are the narrow front portions of the wooden side-pieces of the tree, and the *bellies of the tree* are the broad boards on which the rider sits. The *waist* of a saddle is the narrowest part of the seat, and is about midway between the pommel and cantle. The *pannel* is the lining which lies between the tree and the horse's back. The *point pockets* are the small pockets in which the ends of the points of the tree rest. The *spring bars* allow the stirrup leathers to be attached to or detached from the saddle. The *knee-pads* or *rolls* are placed on the *flaps* to help to prevent the rider's knees going forward. The *skirts* are the small flaps that cover the bars on which the stirrup leathers are suspended. The *sweat flaps* are the pieces of leather which are placed under

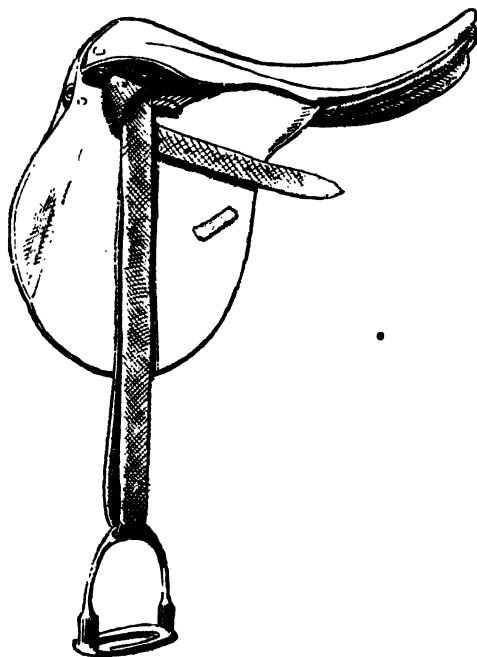
the girth straps on each side to prevent the sweat working through. *Ds* are small semicircular metal hoops which are attached by *chapes* (short leather straps) to the front or back of the saddle for strapping on a coat, shoe case, etc. *Staples* are somewhat similar in size and shape to *Ds*, but are firmly fixed to the tree.

The chief points to be considered about a saddle are that it should be of a suitable fit for the horse's back, and of a proper size and shape for the rider. If well made, it will be long enough without being too heavy. Its length should, as a rule, be proportionate to that of the rider's thighs. A bad rider may require extra weight in the tree, so as to afford him a broad and roomy seat; though a good horseman may well dispense with such aid. Short saddles are most objectionable, both on account of their curtailing the surface over which the weight of the rider is distributed, and also by their tendency to give horses sore backs, as I have pointed out in my *Veterinary Notes for Horse Owners*, page 197, 4th edition.

The saddle between the points of the tree should accurately fit the horse, so that it may retain its position on the animal's back. It often happens that the gullet plate, having more weight thrown on it than it can bear, opens out, and thereby causes the points of the tree to become

separated from the sides of the horse. When this occurs with an ordinary saddle, and under a weight not exceeding, say, 18 stone, we may rest assured that the saddle is at fault.

Fig. 57.

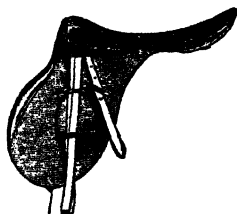


On the contrary, with racing saddles, which are made within very narrow limits of weight, it is almost impossible to have the gullet plate strong enough to preserve its original form, under severe work, for any prolonged period.

The more the gullet plate opens out, the greater chance will it have of hurting the withers.

Many people prefer a saddle with the pommel cut back to one with it cut straight down. The idea of the former (see Fig. 57) looking better than the latter (see Fig. 58) is a matter of taste. It probably gives the horse the appearance of having more sloping shoulders than he would have were the other form used. It may, however, be objected to on account of its requiring a slightly stronger,

Fig. 58.



and consequently a heavier tree than one with a straight-cut pommel, which, as far as my experience goes, affords the better fit of the two.

The points of the tree should slope a little to the front. They will then fit the horse better than if they came straight down, as in Fig. 61; and will not be liable to wear through the flaps, as they often do when of the other shape, by reason of the rider's legs pressing the flaps continually against the points of the tree.

The flaps of a saddle should, as a rule, be cut well "forward" (see Fig. 58), so as to allow the thigh to be kept at a good slope. The flaps may have knee-pads, or be plain, as the rider chooses. The former shape certainly gives a better "grip" to an indifferent rider with round thighs, than the latter. It has, however, been objected to on the ground that it is apt to cause sprains of the knee, thigh and back, especially when landing after a drop jump. Doubtless it is true that such accidents do happen, but they are of sufficiently rare occurrence to be disregarded. The plain flap lasts longer; is somewhat cheaper; looks, I think, more workmanlike than the other; and also shows off the horse's shoulder better. If the rider wishes to secure comfort as well as appearance, he may use a plain flap saddle; but have some stuffing put into the pannel just in front of where the knee comes. He should get the flaps, which in this case should be thin, made very pliable (a little mutton kidney fat or saddle dressing may be rubbed well into them, after they have been damped with water), and then he will find that, after he has ridden a bit in the saddle thus prepared, that there will be a comfortable recess formed for the knee in the flap, which will act just as well as a knee-pad.

Saddles covered with doeskin, or having the flaps covered

with it, and the seat with pigskin, afford the rider a very firm grip. They are, however, more suitable for use in hot climates than in a damp one like England. Doeskin is a very strong, durable kind of leather ; but is expensive. Imitation doeskin, made of sheepskin, does not look very unlike its original ; but wears badly. Calfskin, turned inside out, gives a grip equal to doeskin ; but flaps made of it soon show the wear of the stirrup leathers working backwards and forwards on them. For ordinary saddles, pigskin is too thin to be used alone for flaps. When the flaps are made of one single thickness of leather, they are usually of calf, while the seat may be of pigskin. In these cases, the calfskin will be stamped so as to imitate the grain of pigskin. The copy, however, can easily be detected, by the fact that it is deficient of the holes in which the bristles of the pig took their origin in the real hide. It is probable that kangaroo skin would make a capital substitute for doeskin in the covering of saddles ; as, besides being very strong, this leather, I believe, is but little affected by the action of moisture.

As a rule, cheap machine-made saddles look bad and are comfortable neither to the horse nor to his rider. They are made of inferior leather, have long coarse stitches, and fit the back by reason of extra stuffing in the pannel, and not

as they ought to do by the tree being of a proper shape. As the substance of each hide varies in its different parts, while the strength which is applied to each stitch by the machine remains uniform, the sewing is much inferior to that done by hand.

A saddle should have as little stuffing as possible compatible with an accurate fit and immunity from the danger of its hurting the horse's back; for the less the distance is between the rider and his horse, the firmer will be his seat. The best makers nowadays construct saddles so admirably that they leave little, if anything, to be desired.

Pannels should be "laced" (sewn) in, and not nailed to the tree; for if the latter method be adopted, the nails may work loose and hurt the horse. One nail, placed in the centre and just under the cantle, must be retained.

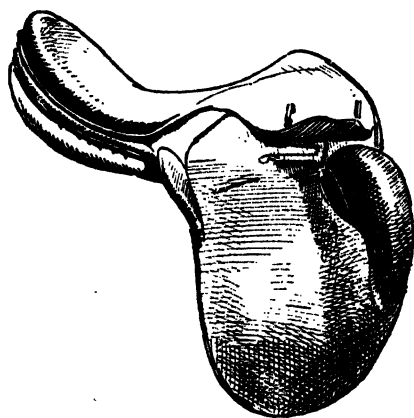
There have been several contrivances invented to save the rider from being dragged in case of a fall, and of his foot catching in the stirrup. I fail to see how any is superior to the plan of keeping the ordinary spring bars open, which allows the leather—unless, indeed, the rider throws all his weight on the stirrups when going up a very steep incline—to be retained as long as the horseman remains in the saddle, and to be released the moment there

is the slightest backward drag. No mechanical arrangement I have ever seen will do more.

For comfort to the horse, the tree, for its entire length, should bear uniformly on the back of the animal, on each side of the backbone, and should be fashioned so as to conform to the shape of the horse; for some animals are much flatter in the back than others. A saddle thus made will distribute the weight evenly over its entire surface. This level-seated saddle, however, does not afford a bad rider as good a chance of "remaining," as one with more dip in the seat, like that shown in Fig. 57, which represents a very comfortable Australian doeskin-covered saddle which is a sort of compromise between the English hunting pattern and the colonial buck-jumping saddle (see Fig. 59). I may mention that this last-mentioned saddle is often provided with a strap, which is used to hold on by, and which was, I believe, invented by the famous Darcy Highland, of wild bull-riding renown. The knee-pads of a regular buck-jumping saddle are about six inches broad, and curve slightly backwards, so as to catch the thigh just above the knee. I have ridden a great deal in the saddle shown in Fig. 57, and can vouch that it appears to be quite as comfortable to the horse as the more level-seated shape. As I have been frequently obliged to ride

strange, and often imperfectly-broken horses, I am quite certain that this saddle has saved me from many a fall, which I would doubtless have got, had I used an ordinary hunting-saddle. A broad "waist" in a saddle is an abomination which should never be tolerated ; although it is but too common a fault in many English saddles.

Fig. 59.



Colonial horsemen all "go in" for saddles with a narrow "grip;" and quite right too. I may mention that the saddle represented by Fig. 57 would be improved by having its flaps cut about two inches more forward.

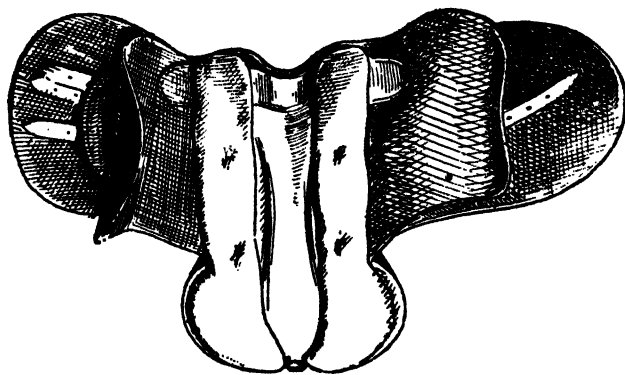
The commonly accepted rule that the weight of a saddle should be proportionate to that of the rider is not quite correct ; for a short, heavy man might ride, with full

comfort to the horse, in a lighter saddle than a lighter, though taller man could do. The weight of an ordinary saddle depends on, (1) the length of tree suitable to the rider's length of thigh ; (2) the shape of the rider's stern ; for if this be broad, extra weight in the tree will be required to give the necessary width in the seat of the saddle ; (3) the amount of material in the tree, so that it may not bend or "give" under the weight. As regards the distribution of weight on the horse's back, it is sufficient to have the tree long enough, so that the cantle may not be unduly pressed into the animal's back, which will not occur with a good rider, if there be about two inches clear of saddle behind his seat.

I can strongly recommend the method adopted by Mr. Nicholls, the London saddler, of covering the pannel of a saddle with leather, on that portion which rests on the back. That part of the pannel which lies, usually, between the flaps and the horse's sides, is replaced by a single thickness of leather, an arrangement which allows the rider's knees to get much closer than they usually can, to the animal's sides. With such a saddle (see Fig. 60), the pannel always remains dry and elastic. It is an advantage to have the pannel of this, or any other saddle, stuffed with curled horsehair, instead of with the ordinary kind of stuffing ; as it will not cake.

Instead of an ordinary saddle we may use one from which the pannel, flaps, girth tugs and sweat flaps, have been removed; leaving only the tree and its leather covering. This stripped tree is placed on a thick felt saddle cloth (see Fig. 61), in which pockets are made for the reception of the points of the tree. A broad surcingle does duty for the girths. This saddle gives a close and

Fig. 60.

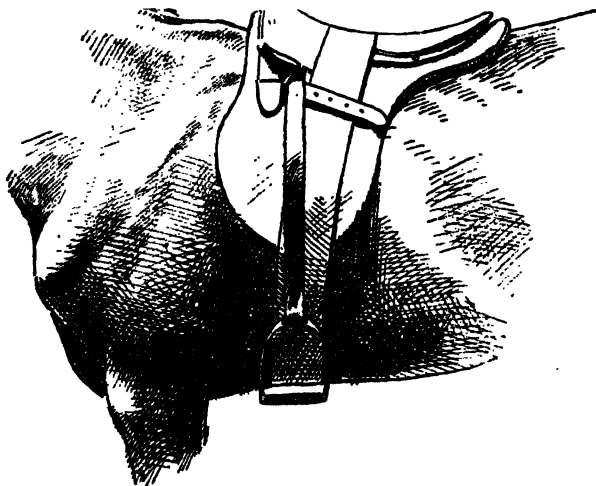


secure seat. It was invented by the late Captain Nolan of Crimean fame, who suggested that it should be used, on service, over a blanket, which, after the saddle was taken off, could be utilised to cover the animal. In this illustration (Fig. 61) the points of the tree do not slope sufficiently forward.

Stirrup-irons for hunting and hacking are most

comfortable, and probably look best when they are moderately large and heavy, say one and a half pounds the pair. Light irons are always more difficult than heavy ones to "pick up," in the event of the horseman "losing" them. When they are small, the rider may find it awkward

Fig. 61.



to get his feet into them, if he have any clay adhering to the soles of his boots, as may often happen in the field, when he has had to walk previous to mounting. Irons with "open bottoms" appear to afford a better hold to the foot than solid ones, whose "jagging" wears smooth after a while.

Girths.—Fitzwilliam girths, which consist of one broad

girth attached to the saddle by two buckles at each side, with an ordinary-shaped girth over it, are perhaps the best for general work. Those made of plaited or twisted raw hide, which are usually called Australian girths, and others made after the same pattern, but of cord, answer extremely well. Being formed of open material, they save the part over which they pass, from becoming heated, and consequently chafed. A capital girth, for colonial work, may be made from a broad leather strap, slit lengthwise into several divisions, and furnished with two or three buckles on each side. The strap may be cut out of the middle of the hide. It may be soaked in neat's-foot oil to make it pliable.

A *girth buckle* should have a bar placed across its under surface, so that the point of the tongue may lie flush with the buckle, and that it be not liable to be pulled through. If the centre bar be absent, the point of the tongue, on account of its being raised, will stick into the flap of the saddle, and wear it out. It will also tear the girth tug or strap when the horse is being ungirthed. Without the centre bar, the girth has to be pulled tighter, when girthing up, than with it. If my description be not plain enough, an inspection of the ordinary girth buckle will explain to the reader the reason why the centre bar is used.

Saddle Cloths.—The legitimate use of a saddle cloth is to save the pannel of the saddle from becoming soiled by sweat. It should be thin in order to avoid giving any “play” to the saddle. A thick one, when used to prevent a sore back, is but a clumsy makeshift. Its use should be restricted to cases in which it is impossible to get the saddle properly stuffed. Saddle cloths made of one thickness of leather, answer their purpose admirably. If constantly worn, they will keep soft and pliable, by reason of their absorbing the oil which is excreted by the skin on which they rest. It is a good plan, before using a new leather saddle cloth, to rub into it a little cod-liver oil, which will keep it soft for a long time.

Bridling the Horse.—Before putting on the bridle, the crownpiece may be held in the left hand, while the right holds the reins at their centre in the full of the hand. The reins are then passed over the head, and placed on the neck. The right hand takes the crownpiece of the bridle, and holds it in front of the face, while the left hand places the bit in the mouth. The right hand may be steadied by its holding the forelock, or by the fore-arm resting on the upper part of the crest. When the groom is small compared to the horse, he may, after putting the rein over the neck, hold the cheek-pieces of the bridle with

the right hand, which he passes underneath the animal's jaw and over its nose, so as to rest there, in order to obtain control. The left hand then puts the bit into the mouth, catches the crownpiece of the bridle and draws it over the ears. The right hand will now quit the nose, take hold of the throat latch, and buckle it up.

Before putting on a double bridle, the bridoon (snaffle) should be placed over the mouthpiece of the curb.

The *snaffle* should be put low enough in the mouth to just avoid wrinkling its corners.

The mouthpiece of the *curb*, as directed by Colonel Greenwood in his excellent book, *Hints on Horsemanship*, should be placed so that it may be just clear of the tushes of the horse, or about one inch above the corner nippers of the mare; in fact, as low as possible without involving the danger of the curbchain slipping over the animal's chin. When the curb is in this position, the curbchain will have but little tendency to work up on to the sharp edges of the lower jaw; and the downward pull on the headstall will be got rid of as much as the construction of the bit will allow. I am aware that when placed in the position I have described, the curb, when its reins are slack, will appear to unaccustomed eyes to be placed far too low. When the reins, however, are drawn

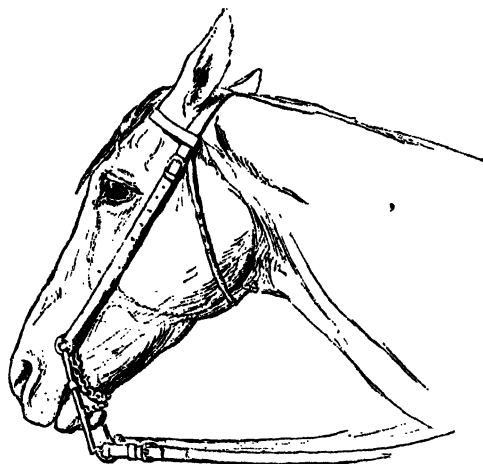
tight, the veriest novice will appreciate the correctness of the adjustment. By adopting this method of arranging the curb, I have succeeded, in scores of cases, as if by magic, in getting horses to go quietly in it, who previously were all but unmanageable with one in their mouths. I am deeply indebted to Colonel Greenwood for this very "straight tip," which is the best I have ever received, from a book, on the subject of biting horses. In the cavalry, the mouthpiece is placed an inch higher in the mouth than what Colonel Greenwood advises.

The *curbchain* should pass *outside* the snaffle, and should lie flat against the chin groove, with a certain amount of play, say, up to about 45° (as in Fig. 62) with the direction of the cheek-pieces of the headstall. If too much play be given, the mechanical advantage of the curb will be more or less nullified. The last links of the chain, on both sides, should be, first of all, respectively attached to the curbchain hooks, and then the slack portion should be taken up, in equal lengths, on both hooks, so that the ring, through which the lipstrap passes, may be equally distant from each of them, and that the shape of the curbchain may be the same on both sides of that part of the jaw against which it presses. The looser the curbchain, the less severe will the bit naturally be.

A *throat latch* should be put on loosely. If buckled tightly, it will not alone incommode the horse's breathing, but will also, as pointed out by "Harry Hieover," spoil the look of his head. If it be put on too loosely, it will appear dealer-like.

Figs. 62 and 64 show a horse properly bridled.

Fig. 62.



If a *noseband* be employed merely for show, it should be moderately loose, as it will then look best; but if for use, it should be drawn tighter. It may, then, be placed high enough so as not to press the horse's nostrils, and sufficiently low to effectually close the mouth. It can then

in no way interfere with the animal's respiration, as he breathes entirely through his nostrils. The presence of a tight noseband may, however, by irritating the horse, make him pull. In such a case, one might use Blackwell's nose net (see page 218).

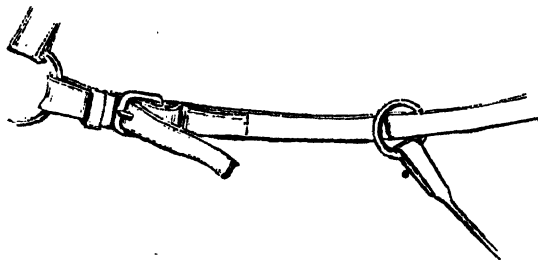
A *running martingale*, as I have before stated, should be sufficiently long to allow the pull of the reins to be in a line with the top of the withers. With horses which carry their heads in a proper position, the martingale may be lengthened out a little more. A short martingale should on no account be employed with animals that are required to jump; as it would render them afraid to face their bit.

I must here explain that the apparent anomaly of which I may seem to be guilty in advising for cross country work, the use of a standing martingale to keep a star-gazer's head down, and yet reprobating the employment of a running martingale for the same object. With the former (attached to the rings of the snaffle) the horse will soon learn how far he can stretch out his head; that he can "save" his mouth by bending his neck and "coming back" to the rider's hand; and that the slightest relaxation of pressure on his part, will be followed by a corresponding diminution of pain to his gums. With a short running martingale, on the contrary, no matter how good the rider's

hands may be, it is impossible for him to slacken the reins and relieve the mouth of pressure, with sufficient quickness, at the instant the horse "gives" to the bit, to reward him for his obedience and thus to gain his confidence.

If "stops" be not on reins which have buckles, the ends of the straps (*billets*) of the buckles should be withdrawn out of their "keepers," as in Fig. 63, so that the rings of

Fig. 63.



the martingale may not catch on the buckles, which might lead to a serious accident with an impetuous horse.

When this martingale is used with the double bridle, it is almost always put on the bridoon reins. When it is employed with a snaffle that has two reins, the lower reins should be passed through the martingale rings. In ordinary riding, two reins are used with a snaffle and martingale; though the Newmarket custom with race-horses is to have only one rein on the snaffle, whether a martin-

gale be employed or not. It being as necessary to keep a horse's head in position, and to ride him up to his bridle, with a curb as with a snaffle, the martingale is as applicable to the reins of the former as it is to those of the latter, always supposing that, with the curb, the martingale is lengthened sufficiently out, so as to allow the pull of the reins to be clear of the top of the withers.

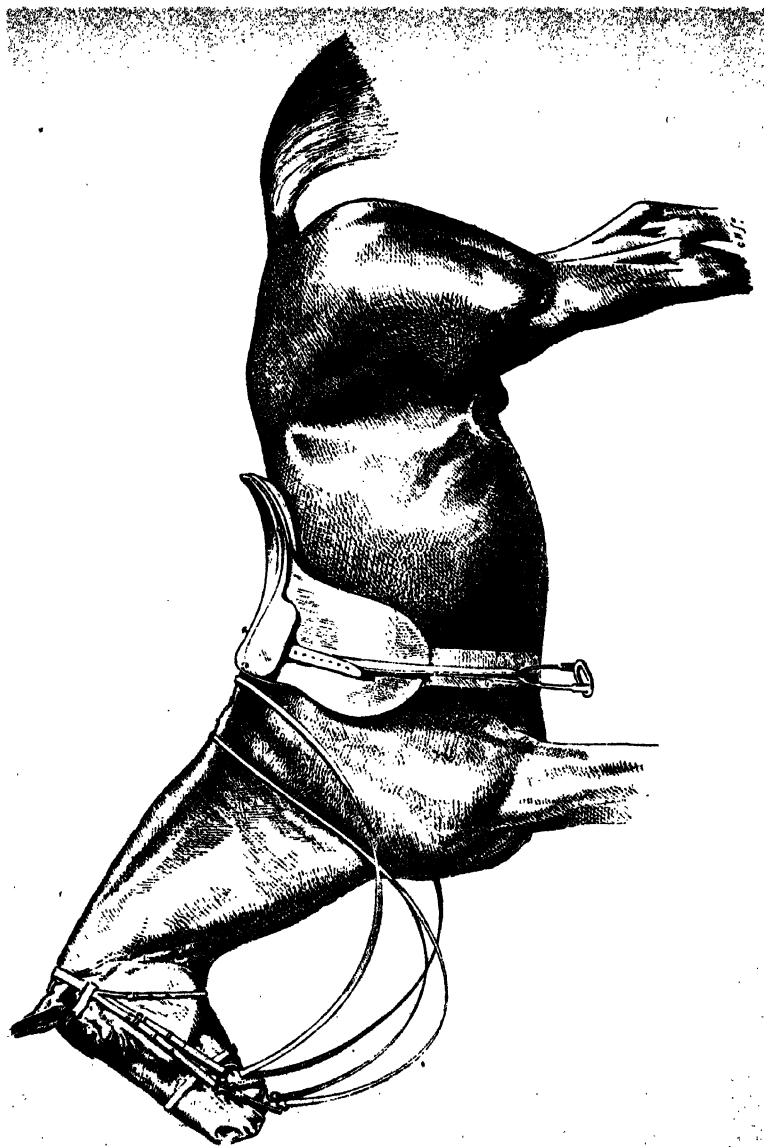
The martingale should be attached to the surcingle, if one be used, or to the front (under) girth.

To prevent a horse from boring to one side, if he has that habit, we may pass a strap through the ring of the snaffle, on the side to which he bears, and through the loop formed by the throat latch, and tighten the strap as required. This arrangement will generally make him go with an "even feeling" on both reins.

When a horse carries his head too low down in galloping, the snaffle may be fixed higher than usual, so that the bearing on the corners of the mouth may make him hold his head up in the manner he ought to do. This arrangement is simply a substitute for the gag snaffle.

The following description of a *plan for bridling buck-jumpers*, such as are met with in Australia, may not be out of place here.

Put on a snaffle with double reins, unbuckle one pair at



the centre, cross them over the withers, and attach them respectively to the Ds on each side—the near rein going to the off D, and the off, to the near—so that the horse may not be able, by any possibility, to get his head down. He should then be ridden with the other reins. This method, which I have often tried with success in India, should be adopted only for breaking in, and not as a regular practice.

Saddling the Horse.—The saddle should be passed backwards over the withers to a position just clear of the “play” of the shoulder-blades. Men who try to make out that the horse has a longer “rein” and a better shoulder than he really has, often put the saddle three or four inches farther back with this object. Such “coping” dodges can deceive only the veriest tyro. Figure 64 shows a horse properly saddled and bridled.

As the centre of gravity of the horse is nearer his fore limbs than his hind, we find that the former are better adapted for bearing weight than the latter. There is however, in putting the weight of the rider too far forward, the drawback of forcing the muscles of the loins that raise the forehand, to work at a mechanical disadvantage, which would be specially detrimental in jumping and galloping. The problem of fixing the proper position of the saddle is too complex a one to be determined by theoretical con-

siderations, and may well be left to be decided by the experience gained from long practice. I may, perhaps, say that if an animal has an upright shoulder, the saddle, with reference to it, should be placed further back than when the horse has an oblique one. I think English riders, as a rule, are inclined to have their saddles put a little more forward than they ought to do.

Before girthing up, the groom should, if a saddle cloth be used, bring, with his finger, the front part of it well up into the arch of the gullet plate, in order to prevent it from being pressed down on the withers.

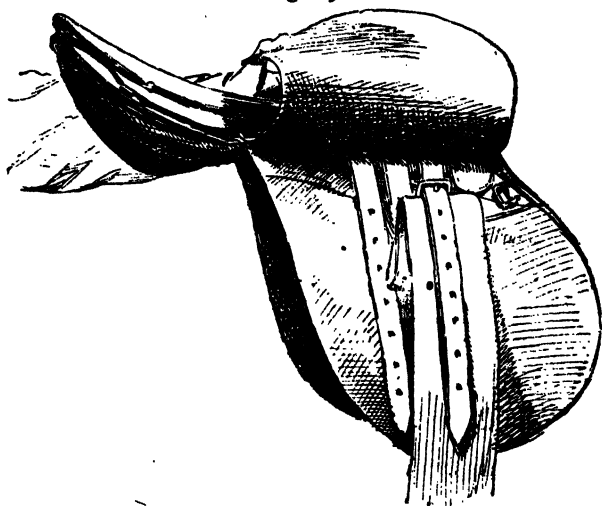
The front girth is taken up first, and then the hind one. We should avoid tight girthing, and should try to hit off the happy medium between the girths being so loose as to allow of the chance of the saddle slipping, and so tight that it would interfere with the horse's breathing. To lessen the possibility of the latter contingency, the girths should be placed well back from under the animal's elbows, when girthing up. The groom, at first, should do little more than take up the slack of the girths; should run his finger between them and the skin, from the near side to the off, so as to smooth out any wrinkles; and should then finally tighten the girths to the required extent.

Some horses swell themselves out on being saddled and

consequently require to be walked about for a short time, after which the girths will have to be taken up afresh, before the rider can mount without incurring the chance of the saddle shifting its position.

For safety's sake, the spring bars of a saddle should be

Fig. 65.



kept always open. When they are so, there is not the slightest chance of the stirrup leather coming out, as long as the rider remains in the saddle, unless he puts all his weight on the stirrups, and happens to perform in a very hilly country, or to scramble up a steep bank. The locks should be kept well oiled, if they are kept closed when used.

When a girth is too long, it may be shortened by taking a fold of the webbing near one end, passing the tongue of the buckle through it, and then attaching the buckle to one of the girth tugs (see Fig. 65). This should be only a temporary measure, as it is apt to spoil the webbing.

A rider may tighten his girths without dismounting, by bringing, say, his right leg in front of the saddle-flap, and then shortening the girths with the right hand (see Fig. 66).

A *stirrup leather* looks neatest on a saddle when the loose end is passed to the rear between the flap and the leather, as in Fig. 57.

The following is a very useful plan for causing a stirrup iron to remain at right angles to the side of the horse, in case the rider's foot comes out, so then he may readily "pick" the stirrup iron up again. Twist the stirrup leather in the direction the hands of a clock proceed, if on the near side, and *vice versa*, until it is pretty well shortened ; then pull it hard down (see Fig. 67) and let it go. On regaining its natural position, the leather will be found to have received a twist which will keep the iron at right angles to the horse's side. An unskilful rider who "loses" his stirrup, often finds great difficulty in catching it again with his foot, if it happens to lie parallel to the horse's side ;

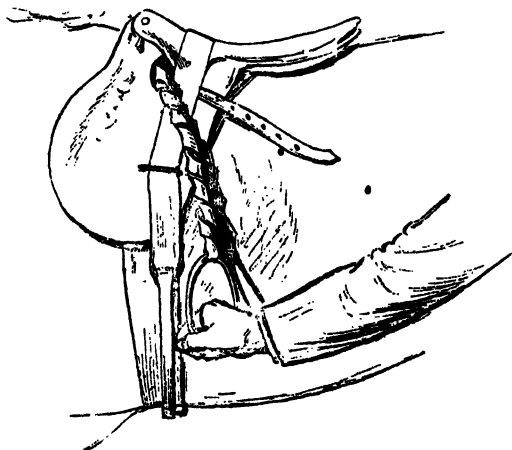
FIG 66.





and he will naturally feel "all abroad" if he is on a difficult horse, or is trying to negotiate a jump, unless he has the support of both stirrups. When the leathers are twisted, as I have described, the iron will be in the very best position for the foot to take it. It also strikes me that in the event of a fall, the feet will come out of the irons

Fig. 67.



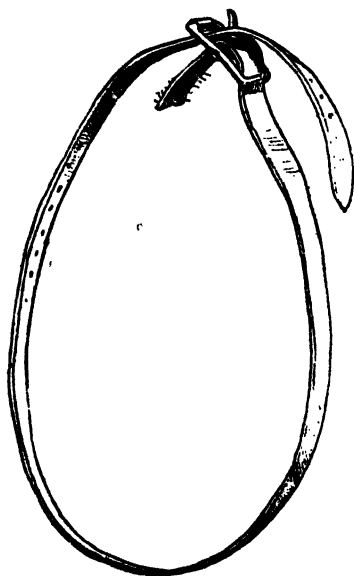
more readily when thus arranged, than they would do had the leather not received a twist.

A ready way of using a stirrup leather, the sewing of which has come undone, is to make a hole in the part where the stitching was, and to pass the tongue of the

buckle through this hole, and also through one of the punched holes at the required length (see Fig. 68).

When a saddle is on a horse without a rider, the stirrup-irons should be thrown across the saddle—the right to the near, the left to the off side—or they should be drawn up

Fig. 68.



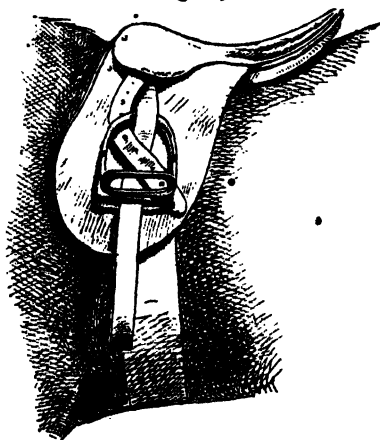
on the leather as shown in Fig. 69. If the irons be allowed to hang down by the horse's sides, he will run the risk of getting one of his hind feet, or his lower jaw, caught in them, in the event of his kicking at flies, etc., or of turning

round to bite at his side. I have known several cases of such accidents.

Choice of a Bit.

As, in all ordinary riding, we require to have perfect command over a horse, the double bridle will be found to be the best one for general use. We may, with it, ride on

Fig. 69.



the snaffle as much as we like, and keep the curb, for emergencies. With the bit and bridoon, men frequently, from not knowing how to hold their reins properly, get into the habit of always riding with an equal feeling on both reins, and then they not unusually blame the double bridle for being too severe. The snaffle is the queen of bits when

used by a really fine horseman on the flat, or by a "mutton-fisted" rider. The former can, by its aid, "get more out" of a horse, than by means of any other bit; and the latter will do less harm, and will "stick" tighter, while holding on to it, than he would do were he to use any form of the curb.

"When my friends have come to me concerning their unmanageable horse, I invariably find the poor animal has been overbitted, or wrongly bitted, and recommend the easiest kind of bit, which, in nine cases out of ten, succeeds" (*Latchford*).

The curb is especially useful for horses that "sprawl about" and require a good deal of "collecting," and also when it is necessary to "pull a horse together," when going through a heavy country, or when he is tired after a long run; for, from the peculiar action of the curb, the animal will, with it, far more readily bend his neck, and, consequently, arch his loins and get his hind quarters under him, than he would do with the snaffle. Hence it is almost indispensable when crossing a country. If the horse holds his head at an angle of not less than 45° with the ground, or if it is kept so by means of a martingale, the pressure of the snaffle will act directly on his bars (gums), and will, if strong enough, cause him to arch his neck; but if he be

allowed to poke his nose out, the pressure of the snaffle will be taken by the corners of his mouth, in which case the indication afforded him by the rider pulling at the reins will be to slacken his speed, rather than to bend his neck ; hence the difficulty often experienced in "collecting" a horse with a snaffle. Oriental cavalry, who use a snaffle furnished with short spikes, have extraordinary power over their chargers, whose heads they tie tightly down by means of a standing martingale.

A large, plain, smooth snaffle is the best of its kind for ordinary work.

The *chain snaffle* is an excellent "all round" bit, especially for pullers. With light-mouthed horses, it may be covered with washleather (see page 189).

The *double-ringed snaffle* (see Fig. 41) may be used for horses which bore to one side or which have, at times, to be turned sharply.

The *gag snaffle* (see page 191) is especially applicable for horses that "bore" their heads down, and for Australian buck-jumpers. By using both reins, the pressure may be regulated, so as to keep the horse's head in a proper position. Stonehenge remarks that "the gag snaffle is particularly well adapted to the double-reined bridle intended for pulling horses carrying their heads too low,"

which the curb has a tendency rather to increase than diminish. The combined use of the two, however, corrects this fault, and a pleasant as well as a safe carriage of the head may be effected."

Mr. J. H. Moore frequently uses a gag snaffle along with a large, smooth snaffle, each having separate reins.

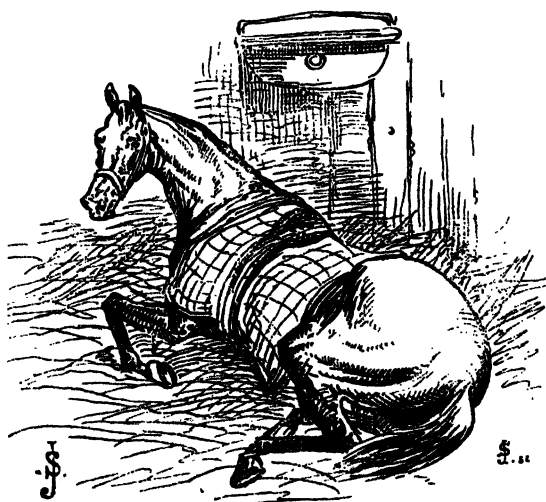
For a bad stargazer, that does not pull outrageously hard, we may connect the reins of a snaffle to the side pieces of a running martingale, after removing the rings of the latter, and then bring them through the rings of the snaffle up to the rider's hands. This combines the effects of the running martingale and of the running reins. The rider who uses this arrangement, ought to have good hands and a firm seat ; for, when the horse, with it, bends or stretches out his neck, the reins will be lengthened or shortened to twice the extent they would be, were they attached to the snaffle rings. Hence the rider must depend for security on the grip of his legs and on balance, as he will not be able to hang on to the animal's head with impunity.

With a stargazer that pulls a great deal, a curb and standing martingale (attached to the rings of the snaffle) may be used.

I think that, as far as appearances go, a double bridle

with a noseband, is the best to set off a horse which has a plain head ; and that a Pelham is by far the worst. A handsome bloodlike head looks best through a snaffle.

I have hardly ever seen a really fine horseman, with a snaffle, or a fairly good rider with a properly made and correctly adjusted curb, fail to hold the most determined puller.



CHAPTER XI.

RACING SADDLERY.

Bridles—Martingales—Saddles—Stirrup Irons—Stirrup Leathers and Webs—Lead Cloths—Weight Jackets and Belts—Adjustment of the Racing Gear.

Bridles.—Unless in very exceptional cases, the ordinary plain or chain snaffle is the only kind of bit which should be used with the racehorse. The thin racing snaffle teaches him to pull, and the curb tends to make him raise his feet too high and bend his knees too much : in other words, to gallop “round.” In cases of doubt, a double bridle may be used, so that in the event of the rider not being able to hold his horse with the bridoon, he may have the bit reins ready to take up. Horses which can be held with a snaffle, gallop, as a rule, in far better form, from a racing point of view, in it, than in a double bridle, even when the bridoon alone is used ; the very presence of the curb seeming to deter them from going boldly up to their bridle. .

A double bridle is less objectionable for teeplechase

riding than for the flat, on account of the greater necessity there is for obtaining command over the horse, and for "collecting" him, in the former, than in the latter business. When it has to be used in a race, the rider, having previously ascertained the exact length of curbchain which suits his mount, should, before going to the starting post, see that the proper number of links, no more and no less, are taken up.

Horses which carry the head too low can be ridden in a gag snaffle (see page 191), or the cheekpieces of the headstall of the snaffle may be taken up a little (see page 244). One should be very careful not to adopt any method of arranging the bridle gear which might, in the slightest, check the horse's speed.

It is the fashion at the present time to use only one rein with the snaffle, even when a martingale is on (see page 243).

Martingales.—A running martingale will generally be required; for apart from its use in keeping a stargazer's head down—in which case it will have to be somewhat shortened—it is, even when lengthened out, a most powerful aid in steadying a horse in his gallop, in turning him, and in enabling the jockey to catch a firm "hold of his head." It is especially useful with young horses that are apt to "yaw" about, and with steeplechasers.

Although the *standing martingale* has been used with signally good effect for cross-country work (see page 221), it is hardly ever employed in flat-racing. I have, however, seen many cases of races thrown away by jockeys not being able to hold their horses at false starts, when a standing martingale, properly adjusted, would have given them the power to control their mounts, and win comfortably. I have frequently used, both in training and in flat-racing, the standing martingale with horses I have owned or have had charge of. After the flag has dropped, except in long races, the pace will generally be sufficient to hold a horse without the aid of any special appliance.

Saddles.—The first point to be considered about *racing saddles* is that they should be long and roomy, as well as light. A two and a half pounds or three pounds saddle, all complete with irons, webs, girth and surcingle, ought not to be less than fifteen inches in length; though a six or seven pounds training or steeplechase one should be more than an inch longer.

The *steeplechase saddle* should fit as close as possible to the horse, without actually pressing on the vertebræ of the back, and all unnecessary stuffing and saddle cloths should be dispensed with, so as to avoid giving play to the saddle. It may be covered with doeskin in order to afford

the rider a firm seat. Unless a very light one be used, it should be provided with spring bars for the stirrup leathers. The locks should be always left open. The confidence that the rider obtains from the knowledge that he runs no risk of being dragged, in the event of an accident, is, certainly, worth the addition of a pound or two to the weight of the tree, especially, when it makes the saddle all the more comfortable for the horse.

Leaded saddles, which may be made to weigh a couple of stone, or even more, are very useful when dead weight has to be put up; or for trials, when the trainer does not want his jockeys to know more than he can help.

The ordinary steeplechase saddle is similar to the nine or ten pounds one which is used for training work: though it may be made as light as four pounds all complete. Some exceptionally strong riders, like what Mr. Garrett Moore was, are able to ride across country in a two pounds racing saddle, almost as well as they can do in one five times the weight. Apart from the question of comfort to man and horse, such a very light saddle can hardly be expected to last more than one journey "between the flags;" for even if the tree escapes being broken, the gullet plate will be almost certain to open out, and, consequently, to press on the withers.

The question of having spring bars or not, is simply one of weight. A saddle with them requires a moderately strong tree to bear the rivets for fastening them on. Hence, it cannot well be made under five pounds all complete.

The Stirrup Irons of racing and steeplechase saddles should have plenty of room for the foot, so that there would be little chance of its being held in the event of a fall. I am convinced that when a man gets "dragged," it is nearly always on account of the stirrup being too small. I have known only one case of a rider's foot getting caught by its going through the iron. This solitary instance, in my experience, happened during a fall, when both horse and jockey came down. It seems impossible that a sufficiently large stirrup can retain the foot, unless its upper part first catches high up on the instep. To prevent this occurring, the steeplechase, and even the flat race, rider may have long heels to his boots, which will prevent the irons working too far back on the foot. Most of us doubtless have felt when riding, with ordinary short-heeled boots, and with our feet well "home," the irons sometimes catch on our insteps in this manner. Very light racing boots have no heels. As light stirrups of inferior material are very apt to bend from the rider's weight, and consequently to

catch on his feet, great care should be taken that none but those of the very best steel be used.

For racing saddles, the upper part of the eyes of the stirrup irons should be covered with leather, in order to prevent the iron from cutting the webs.

Stirrup Leathers and Webs.—For steeplechasing, leathers are to be preferred to webs, as they are less liable to break; and, with them, the rider can pick up his stirrup much more readily than if he had webs, which have a great tendency, when loose, to twist and fly about, the moment the rider's foot quits the stirrup iron, when the horse is galloping.

The best kind of web is the "circular" one, the material of which is of a double thickness. The single web is apt to break and wear out quickly. With light leathers, the part through which the holes are punched should be strengthened, as is always done with webs, by an extra thickness of leather; as the fracture, when it takes place, almost always occurs at the hole through which the tongue of the buckle passes.

Lead Cloths.—The trainer should have weight cloths capable of containing different amounts, with their own actual weights respectively marked on them. One or two cloths weighted with leather up to four or five pounds, will

come in useful; and there should be one, at least, capable of carrying about twenty-one pounds so as to obviate the necessity of putting on two small ones; for the saddle will then have less play than it would have were the latter employed.

Each pocket of the weight cloth is, usually, secured by a strap and buckle for safety sake. The only objection to buckles is that they prevent the flaps of the saddle and those of the pannel from lying flat on the weight cloth. Instead of buckles, the pockets may be secured by loops through which passes a strap that is sewn to the rear part of the cloth, and is attached to a buckle on its front part, which lies beyond the saddle flap. If the buckle be to the rear, the rider, when using the whip, might hurt his knuckles against it. To prevent a weight cloth slipping off during a race, it may be secured, on each side, by a strap attached to the front part of the cloth, having at its end a loop through which the girth strap passes. This arrangement will prevent the cloth from slipping backwards. It has no tendency to slip forwards. Or the weight cloth may be kept in its place by straps at each end, which straps come over the flaps of the pannel and girth, and are then buckled together.

The *leads* should be thin and very pliable, and may be

covered with washleather, on which it is convenient to mark their respective weights, which will average about half a pound. There should be a few light leads to make up exact weight. In order to obtain increased pliability, leads of half the ordinary thickness may be sewn up in pairs. Leads are covered with washleather, to prevent them from slipping out of the pockets of the cloth, and also to permit of their being provided with "tags," so that they may be readily removed, if required.

Weight Jackets and Belts.—Instead of a weight cloth, a weight jacket may be used, in case the trainer wants to keep a trial "dark." The jacket should be made to fit tight, and should have pockets round the body to contain leads. In this way a stone or more may be carried. A shot belt may be used, for the same purpose, around the waist; and should be supported by shoulder straps. For a steeplechase, a weight cloth is much to be preferred to a weight jacket; as the latter impedes, and often hurts, the rider by the leads striking against his sides. For a flat race, I think the jockey will ride to greater advantage with a weight jacket, than if all the lead was in a weight cloth.

Adjustment of the Racing Gear.—The manner of putting on the *bridle* has been described on page 238.

The *martingale*, for ordinary racing purposes, should be

of such a length that, when drawn straight up, the rings will reach to about four or five inches above the top of the withers. For steeplechasing, however high the horse may hold his head, it should never be so short as to make the pull of the reins to come below the withers.

The *saddle* should be placed just clear of the animal's shoulder blades and no more. For a training gallop it may be placed a little farther back, so as to lessen the strain on the fore legs, unless, indeed, the horse has a weak spot behind. The *surcingle* alone should pass through the loop of the running martingale, and its buckle should come low down, so as not to press against the horse's side and hurt him. A *pad*, about a foot broad, and eight inches long, with about four inches down the centre unstuffed, will be useful with a light racing saddle, to prevent the gullet plate from pressing on the withers. If there be danger of this happening, and a pad be not at hand, one may be easily made for the occasion, by taking a flannel bandage, folding it in two, and then rolling it up very loosely from both ends, till the two rolls are within five or six inches of each other. This improvised pad may be placed over the withers and underneath the pommel of the saddle. The tapes of the bandage may be previously removed. If a bandage be not at hand, a rubber may be

folded and used in the same manner. By this plan, the gullet plate will be kept off the withers. Even when the gullet plate does not come down too low, a thin woollen pad is generally used to protect them, when a racing saddle is put on. A large sponge makes a good pad. Two sponges, one at each side of the withers, would act better than one placed (as is usually done when a sponge is employed) on the top of the withers.

It is advisable when girthing up a racing saddle, to have the girth one hole looser than it would be, were there no surcingle, and to have the surcingle one hole tighter than the girth. This is done to prevent both "going" in the event of the animal unduly expanding his chest; an accident that not very unfrequently happens.

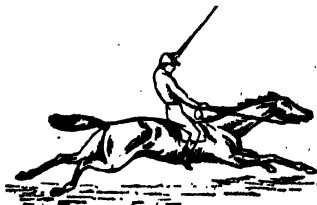
Leathers for steeplechasing should be twisted, just before the race, in the manner shown in Fig. 67.

As it sometimes happens that amateurs who are not particularly good horsemen attempt to ride over a country, I trust I may be pardoned by critical readers, if I remark that the best way to make a saddle less slippery than it would naturally be to an indifferent rider, is, before mounting, to rub over the seat and flaps a little finely powdered resin. This is infinitely more efficacious than wetting them, or the insides of the breeches, with water. I

would not advise any such practice to be adopted for ordinary riding ; but, in a chase, especially when "the money is on," a man's first object should be to "remain" in his saddle.

New *girths* should not be put on for a race, as they will stretch considerably, and may allow the saddle to shift its position, or even to turn round. A *silk girth* should never be used, as it will be almost certain to hurt the horse. It is far better, instead of using a silk one, to put up a little extra weight in the form of a comfortable web girth, which should be comparatively broad.

A *weight cloth* should be placed well forward, with the leads equally divided on both sides. If there be an odd piece, it may be put in one of the pockets of the off side, if the race be on a right-handed course, and *vice versa*. To prevent the horse's sides from being hurt, no leads should be put into the pockets over which the girth passes.



CHAPTER XII.

MILITARY RIDING.

ALTHOUGH the first object of this book is to teach the art of riding in a manner suitable for the requirements of civilians ; still so many "soldiers" do me the honour of reading my books, that I would be ungrateful were I not to add a few remarks that may render their school-work easier to them, than if they had to rely solely on the instructions of the "red book." If my readers have time to thoroughly study the subject, I would strongly advise them to take up Barroil's *L'Art Équestre*, or Fillis's *Principes de Dressage et d'Équitation*, or (better still) both, and thus go to the sources from which I have gained most of the little knowledge I possess of work in the *manège*.

I have explained on page 57, that as only the little finger separates the reins when they are held in one hand (see Fig. 10) ; the length by which one rein can be made,

by the play of the wrist, shorter than the other, is equal only to the thickness of the little finger, which, although it may be sufficient for the well-trained horse when within the walls of the riding school, will, in the majority of cases, be inadequate for control and direction, under conditions of excitement in the open. Hence, the cavalryman, as a rule, teaches his horse, sooner or later, to turn to the left by the pressure of the right rein on the neck, as well as by the feeling of the left rein, and *vice versa*. Although, in this case, we may cheerfully accept the inevitable; still the animal's movements will be more precise and better balanced, if we train him by using a rein in each hand, or by holding the reins crossed in one hand, to thoroughly obey the direct indications of the reins, before initiating him into the use of the reversed ones. Holding the reins crossed as in Figs. 1, 5, 6, or 7, will enable one rein to be shortened four or five times as much as it could be, when only the little finger separates the reins.

We are told in the *Cavalry Regulations* that the way to prevent the horse's hind quarters coming round too quickly, as for instance in the turn, is by "closing" the outward leg. It happens, however, that the portion of the horse's side which would be acted upon by the closing of

either leg, would be in front of the centre of gravity of the weight to be moved (that of the horse and rider), or would be so close to it, that such pressure would be useless, if not detrimental to the object in view. Also, we may often hear in the riding school, the expression, "a stronger pressure of the outward leg." To this I may remark that it is impossible, while preserving one's seat fair and square in the saddle, to press one leg, to any appreciable extent, stronger to one side of the horse than to the other. I need hardly say to those who have read the fourth chapter of this book, that the proper way to "support" the hind quarters—at the turn, in the passage, etc.—is to *draw back* the outward leg and apply the flat of the foot, the heel, or the spur (as the case may require) to the side. I may mention that the mere "feel" of the leg, as it is being drawn back, will often be sufficient for a well-broken horse. If we have to turn the animal on his forehand (which would be required only at the halt or in executing some school evolution), the hind quarters should be brought round by drawing back and applying the inward leg. If the turn be on the centre, the inward leg should bring round the hind quarters; and the outward leg (with the flat of the foot applied near the elbow), the forehand.

The directions in the drill-book are manifestly wrong for

the rein back ; as the stronger pressure of both legs and the stronger feeling of both reins (as directed) are simply indications to make the horse "collect" himself. If they be used beyond that, they would have the effect of making the horse run back, not rein back. Hence, we seldom see a well-collected rein back performed in any of our riding-schools. Our English military books do not even tell us what kind of a pace the rein back is, nor do they provide us with any instructions for making a horse begin the rein back with whichever diagonal pair of legs we wish ; *i.e.* with the near fore and off hind, or with the off fore and the near hind. With the fear of the run back before their eyes, the authors of these books tell us to ease the reins and the pressure of the legs the moment the horse takes a step to the rear, and then to apply the aids as before, so as to get another step to the rear. Such a rein back, with a halt between each step, cannot be called a well-executed movement to the rear. By applying the aids as described on pages 62 and 63, the horse will begin with whichever diagonal we wish, and will move to the rear with as true balance and cadence, as he would to the front. Driving the horse with the long reins according to the method laid down in *Illustrated Horse Breaking*, will greatly facilitate the task of teaching a horse to rein back

properly. I may mention that in order to lighten the hind quarters in the rein back, it may be necessary to lower the reins.

In the "passage" (which has no resemblance to the *air de manège* spelt in the same way in French), M. Barroil directs that the outward leg should be drawn back and applied to the side, the moment the outward fore-foot comes on the ground in front of the inward fore-foot (see Fig. 70) ; and that more weight should be put on the stirrup of the side to which the passage is being made, than on the other one.

In the "shoulder-in," the left for instance, the left foot should be advanced and applied either at, or immediately behind, the near elbow, so as to aid in preserving the curve of the front part of the body, while the right foot does the same office for the hind quarters.

CHAPTER XIII.

"MAKING" POLO PONIES.

I PROPOSE here to glance at the training of polo ponies, as it cannot be dissociated from the subject of riding them. Having considered at length in *Illustrated Horse Breaking*, the subject of giving horses good manners and snaffle bridle mouths, I beg to refer my readers to it for all further details of the system which I here advocate.

Ponies that are deemed likely to play polo will seldom require any severe discipline to bring them under control. If they be difficult to mount or handle, a few lessons with the rope twitch, in teaching them to obey the word "steady!" will generally be sufficient to render them obedient. If a pony be inclined to be "savage," riding him a few times with the wooden gag in his mouth, in addition to the ordinary snaffle, will soon make him quiet. Even if the animal is not thoroughly docile, four or five lessons with the long reins will knock any remaining nonsense out of him.

When employing the long reins, we should have the standing martingale lengthened out as described on page 222, and fixed to a large, smooth snaffle. We should have a driving-pad, and a crupper to keep it in place. If possible we should give these driving lessons in an enclosed space, not less than sixteen yards in diameter.

On first beginning, we should make the pony circle round us to the right and then to the left, with frequent changes, while we remain more or less stationary in the centre. The outward rein should pass round the hind quarters of the animal, so as to make him describe the same circle with his hind feet as with his fore. The inward rein will keep his head turned in the direction in which he is going. We should make him turn sharply to either side by the action of the rein on the snaffle, and also by its pressure in making the hind quarters swing round. When he has thus learned to circle and turn in a collected manner with the outward rein round his hind quarters, we should make him do these movements with it on the driving-pad ; and we may then wind up our lesson (say, of half an hour's duration) by teaching him to rein back. In this, we should keep in view the principle, enunciated on page 63, of making him rein back by the alternate feeling of the reins. If he rebels against the order to rein back,

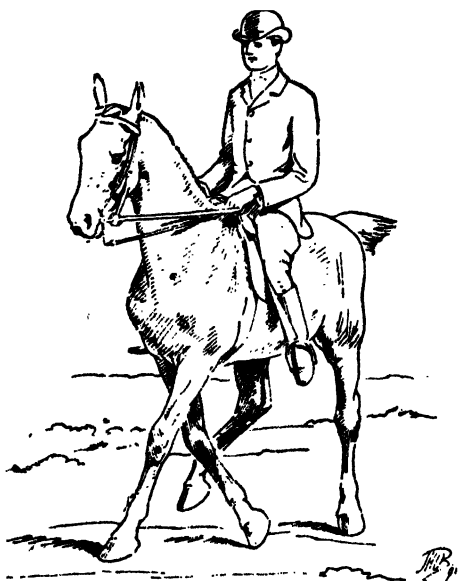
we may lighten his hind quarters, from whence generally comes the resistance, by lightly touching him with the whip, below the hocks. The reins may be lowered or the outward one may be kept on the pad according as circumstances may require. I may mention that in teaching the rein back with the long reins on foot, it is best to stand a little to one side of the horse, and not directly behind him. After the animal has reined back steadily four or five paces, he ought to be rewarded by giving him the signal to go forward.

One great object we should have in view in this driving lesson, is to get the pony to "give and take" to the pressure of the bit. To do this perfectly, he should bend the joints of his neck and those of the lower jaw with the utmost freedom, and should "play" with the bit. As a rule, six or eight of these driving lessons (two a day) will be sufficient to make the pony bend to the rein with perfect suppleness. As soon as this condition is arrived at, we may mount him, and taking a rein in each hand, circle and turn him at the walk and trot, and rein him back, remembering to apply the proper aids of hand and leg (see pages 41 and 62). When beginning the canter, we may use a circle of about 30 yards diameter and gradually reduce it down to one of 16 yards. By employing the figure of 8, as described on

pages 45 and 46, we may get him to strike off with whichever fore-leg we wish. After the pony has learned all this in an enclosed place or school, we should try him outside, and may mark the figure of 8 by two poles placed, say, 10 yards apart. When he is perfect with them, we may add other poles at varying distances, so as to thoroughly test him; and make him serpentine through them, taking care that he changes his leg at each turn. After a little practice, he will do this serpentine at almost racing pace. We should vary this instruction by teaching the pony to pull up sharply when required. Habitually using some word (such as "Whoa!") which should be rigidly reserved for this purpose, will greatly facilitate our object. The halt should be first taught at the walk, then at the trot and canter, and finally at the gallop. If the animal will not obey quickly enough at the fast paces, he should be put back to the slower ones, and should be well exercised at the rein back. We may reserve, for the pull up, the indication of closing the legs, so that the toes of our boots will come close behind the elbows of the animal. The rider will find that the standing martingale will greatly increase his power of control, and, if properly applied, will in no way hamper the movements of his mount. I may mention that blinkers should on no

account be used ; as they introduce a serious element of danger into the game. We should look upon severity in a bit as an evil, even if it be a necessary one. If we find we cannot hold our pony with the snaffle we are using, we

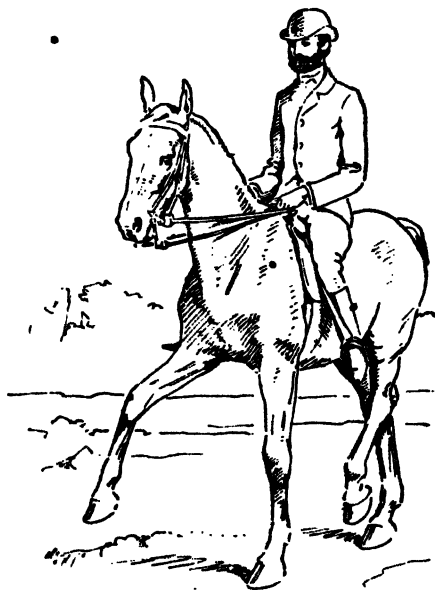
Fig. 70.



might try a heavier one, or seek the additional aid of a standing martingale properly put on (see page 222). If this prove unavailing, I would advise, that instead of adopting a curb, the effect might be tried of giving the pony a dozen lessons or so in circling, turning, and

especially reining back, with the long reins and, also, in the saddle. If a curb has to be used, it should be put low down in the mouth (see page 239), and it should be constructed according to the principles laid down on pages 202 to 206.

Fig. 71.



We should now teach the pony the passage, which is a side movement either to the right or to the left. It can be performed at any pace ; the most usual being the walk and the canter. If the animal passages to the right (see

Figs. 70 and 71), his near fore and near hind foot will respectively work in front of the off fore and off hind, so that four parallel lines will be described. The pony's body should be placed obliquely on these lines, so that the shoulders will lead the haunches. The head should be turned slightly to the right, so that he may look in the direction in which he is going. The right rein will lead the animal off and will preserve the bend of the neck; the left leg, being drawn back, will prevent the hind quarters from coming round; the right foot, being advanced, will maintain the bend of the neck; and the left rein, applied against the neck, will help in leading off the forehand. The animal's movements will be facilitated by the rider putting a little more weight on the off stirrup than on the near. In passaging to the left these aids will be reversed. The full passage is a movement at right angles to the direction in which the horse was originally placed. In the half passage he moves at an angle of forty-five degrees to it; for he advances as much as he moves to the side. In beginning to teach the passage, we ought, while advancing to the front at a walk, gradually accustom our mount to passage a little to one side or the other, until he does the half passage well. In the same manner, we may get him to do the full passage, in which we shall be much

helped, at first, by working with a wall in front of us. We may, also, teach the horse to passage at the trot and canter. I may here repeat M. Barroil's advice (see page 271) that the outward leg should be drawn back and applied to the side, the moment the outward fore-foot comes on the ground in front of the inward fore-foot (see Fig. 70) I may mention that a pony or horse can, with the long reins, be quickly taught the passage. The great advantage of a pony learning the passage, is that it enables the player, while keeping his original direction, to take ground either to the right or to the left, without being obliged to turn his animal twice.

The further education of the pony will consist in accustoming him to the stick, ball, and game. He should be gradually brought on to play, so that he may have full time to understand what is required of him. If he be hustled about before he does so, the chances are that he will become disgusted with the game, and will be useless for polo.

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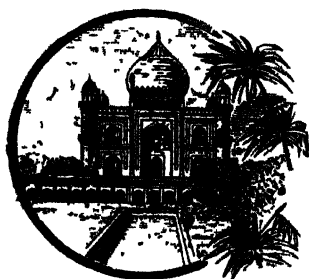
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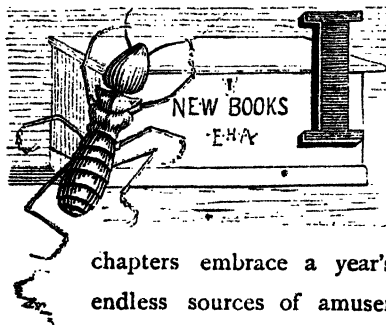
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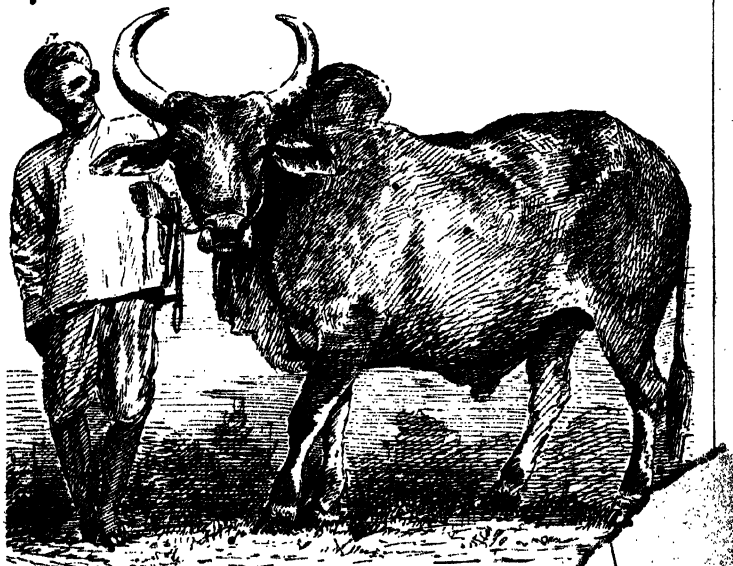
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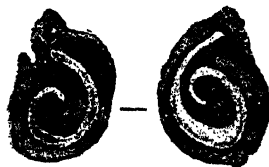
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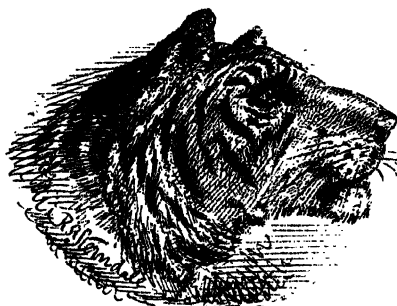
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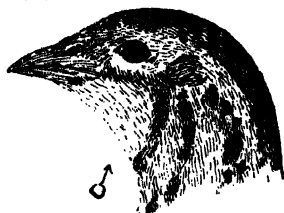
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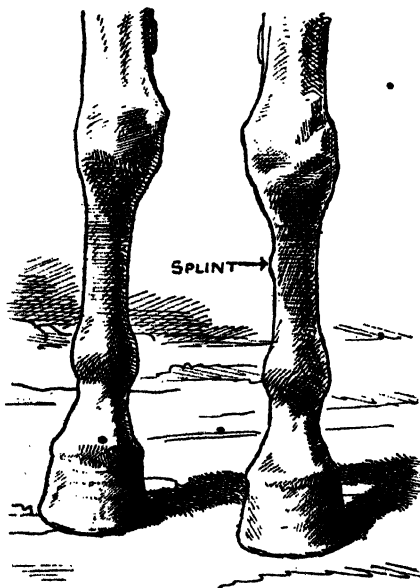
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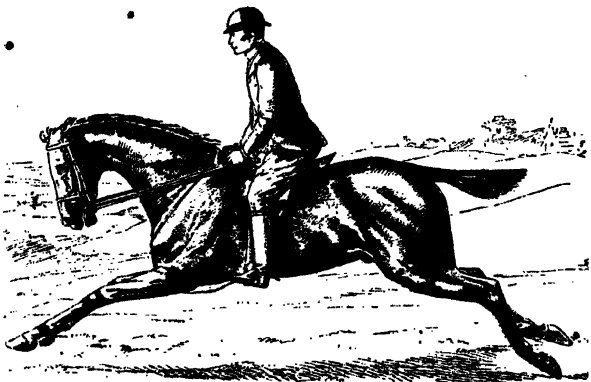
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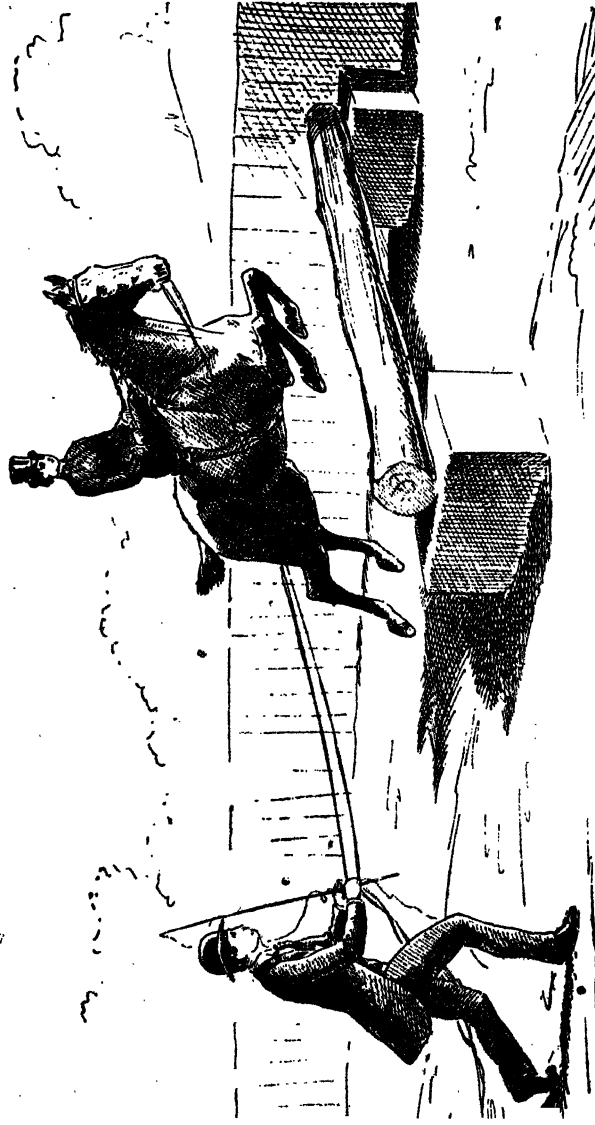
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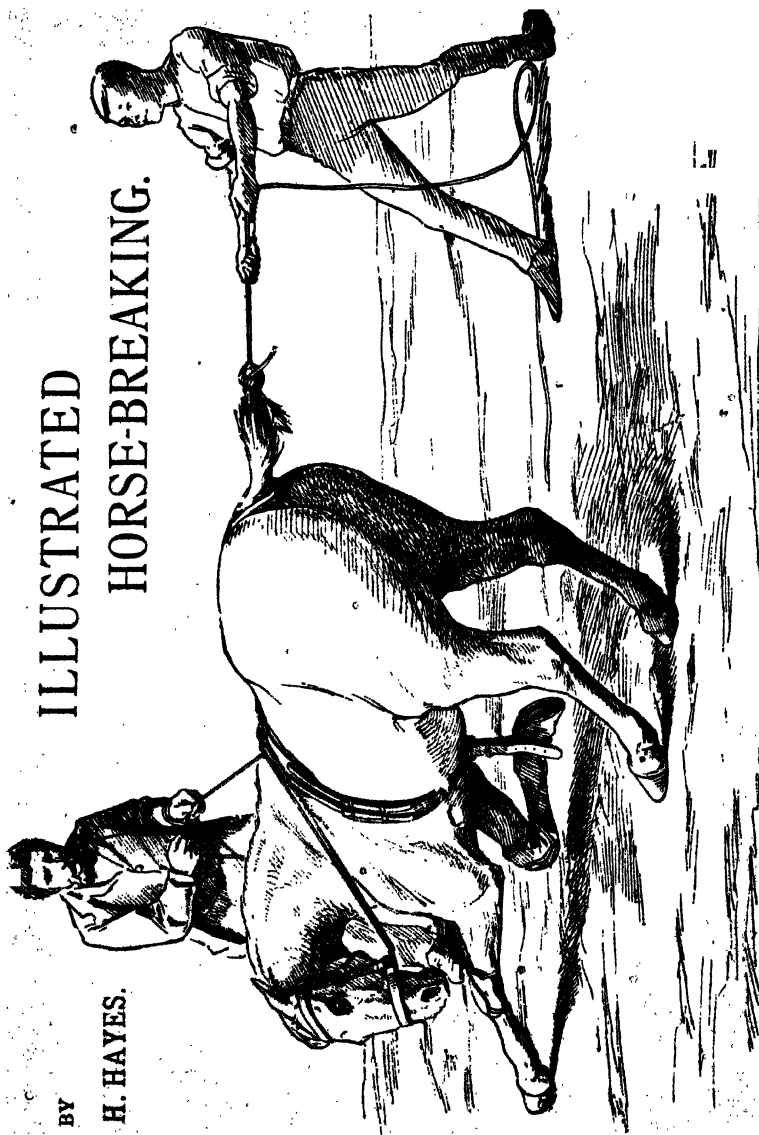
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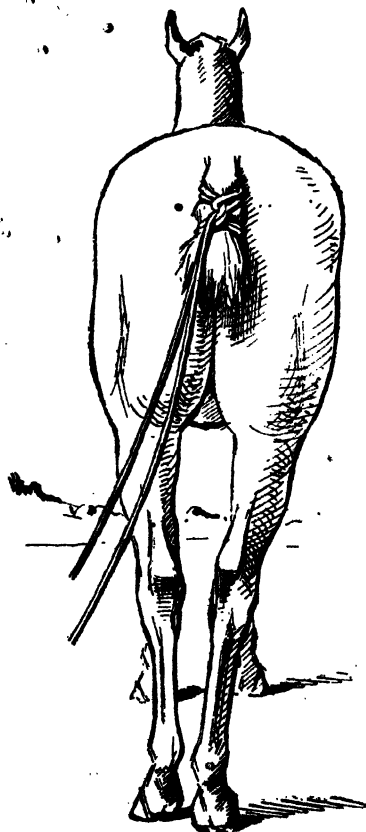
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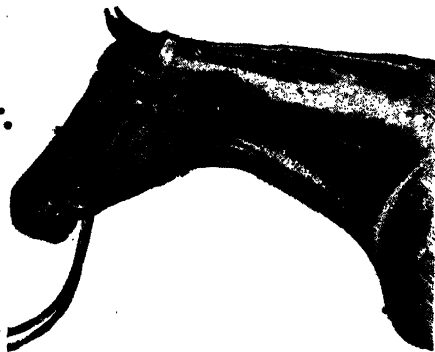
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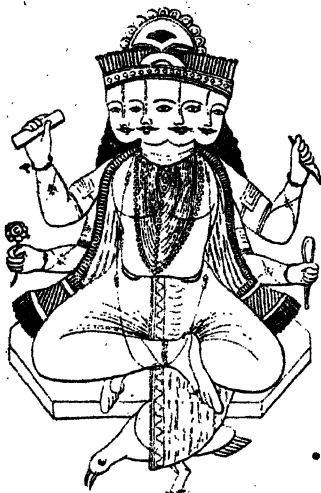
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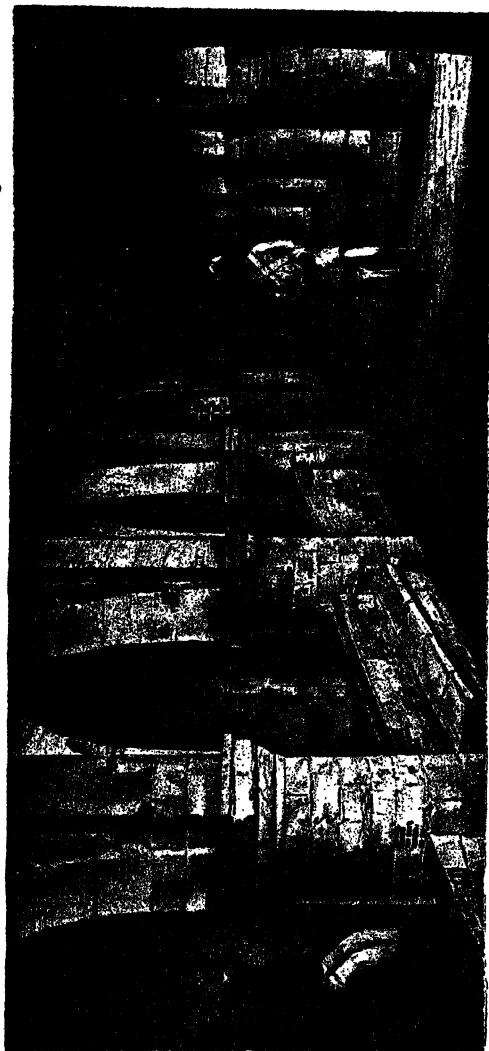
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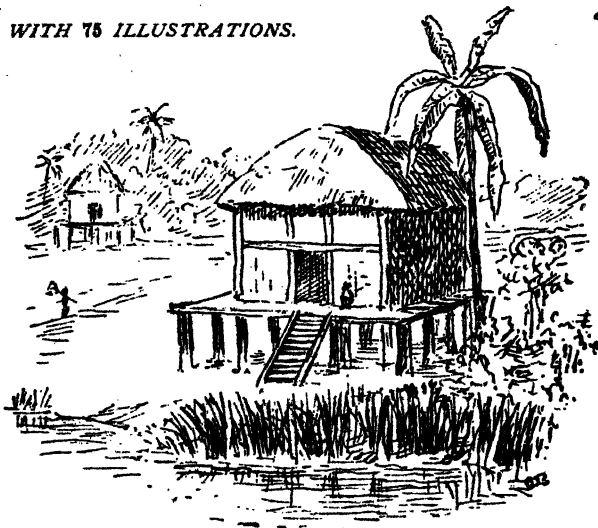
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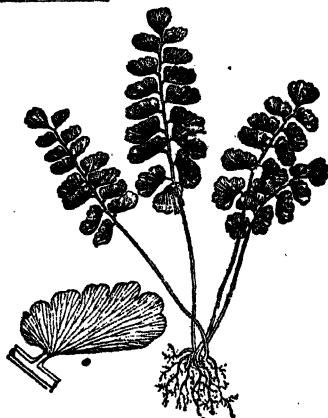
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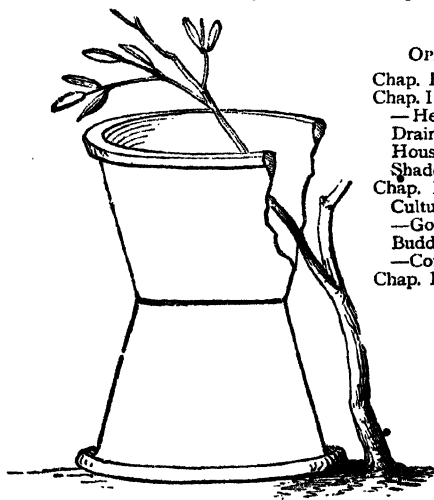
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